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God's way: man's way

Henrietta M. K.
Brownell

William B. Cairns Collection

of

American Women Writers

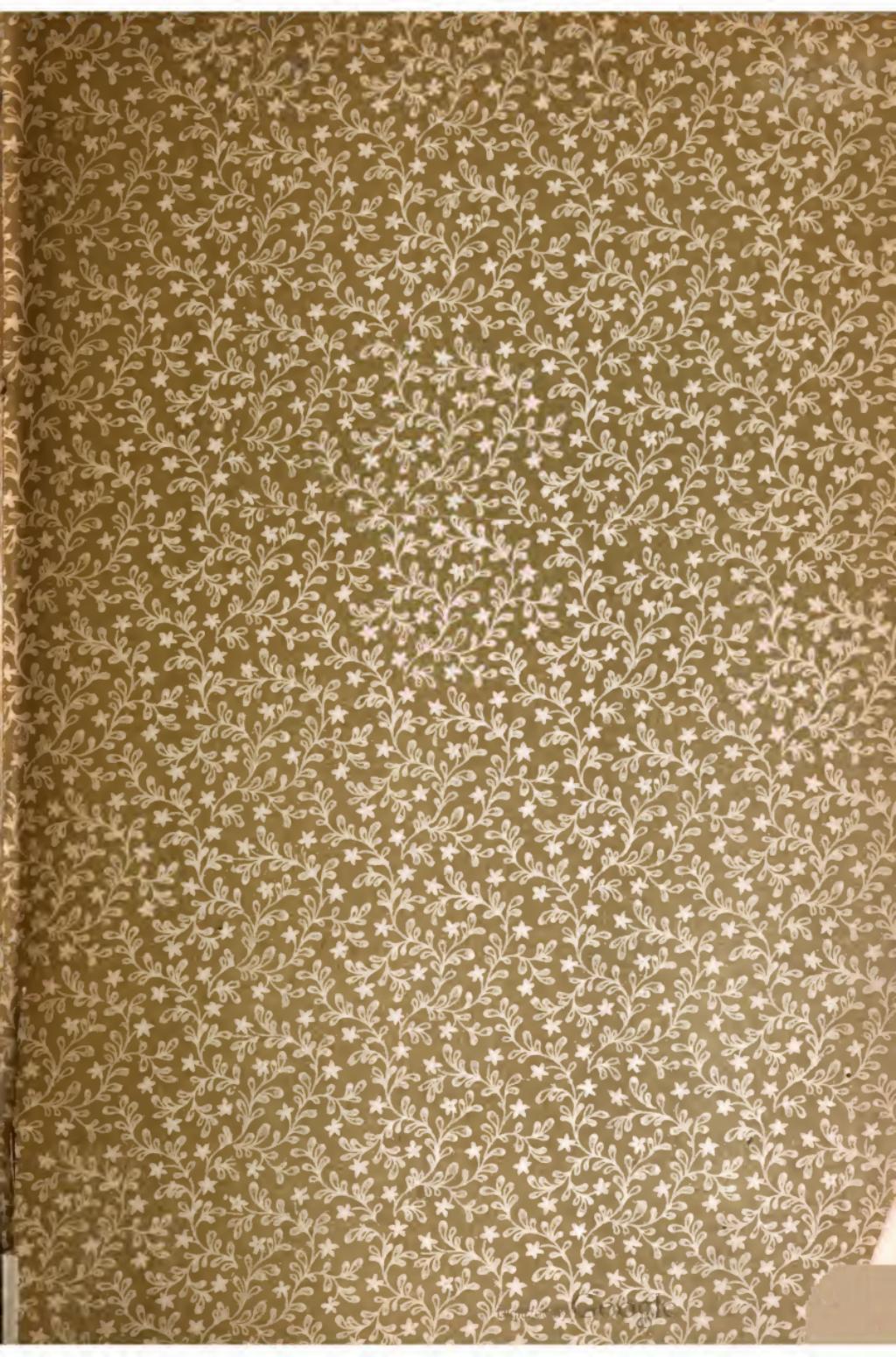
1630-1900



William B. Cairns

Professor of English

University of Wisconsin- Madison



Rev. P. McCabe
with hearty Easter
greeting from
The Author

1870

P. Whiting

GOD'S WAY : MAN'S WAY

A STORY OF BRISTOL

BY

HENRIETTA M. K. BROWNELL

NEW YORK

THE CATHOLIC PUBLICATION SOCIETY CO.

9 BARCLAY STREET

LONDON : BURNS & OATES

—
1885

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TO THE MEMORY
OF
A Dead Priest
WHOSE HEART WAS LARGE WITH
CHRISTIAN CHARITY.





PREFACE.

FIN the liberty of authorship I have sketched from the life around me, and, under the veil of altered circumstance, portrayed characters whom I have known, I trust that they have been drawn with no ungentle pen, and that no lesson has been taught beneath the high ideal that has been steadily before me. My purpose has been lofty; may its execution prove worthy!

H. M. K. B.

BRISTOL, 1885.



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GOD'S WAY: MAN'S WAY.

A STORY OF BRISTOL.

I.

INTRODUCTORY.

“  MAN must breathe!”
“ I can’t see the necessity.”
“ You are pleased to be facetious.”
“ Not at all; I am merely replying to the spirit of all that you have been saying rather than to the literal phrases you have used.”
“ I see: you condemn the liberty of action that I demand in the affairs of life.”
“ When that liberty becomes license.”
“ And I disavow equally the bondage into which, as a Catholic and a priest, you suffer yourself to be led. You renounce too much. God has made his world beautiful and enjoyable for man’s benefit; let him enjoy it. He decked the apple-trees and made beautiful faces, where one might have been flowerless, the other hideous, that both might minister to man’s delight.”

“ And you think all sense of beauty is wasted

or lost on a cleric, then, because there is some limitation to his indulgence?"

"I know that your Lents, and your celibacy, and your toil, your servitude to sickness and pestilence, present a sorry picture of life to me, let alone parish quarrels and parish bondage, the enemies you are forced into making if you abstain from taking sides, or, worse still, in sustaining the weak side of right. You have no social enjoyments worth naming; in short, there is hardly an hour of sunshine to fix on in the life of a zealous parish priest, and I should think, for the man himself, the sooner it ended the better. Forgive my plain speech, but you know, Father Hubert, there was never dissimulation between us."

"True enough, Elliott, and frankness from you will be the last thing that will demand forgiveness from me; but can you form no conception in your own mind of a life that is not self-seeking, of giving one's best to others and for them, and finding therein a happiness of a different nature and on a higher plane than that of simple selfish enjoyment? Can you fancy a person doing this, taking a little less pleasure in life, that a hundred others may take more—doing without, it may be, some of the most palpable joy, to taste of a higher happiness that comes through the multiplied happiness of others? I do not dwell upon the crowning motive of all—the love of God, and the sacrifice

one makes of his tiny all to One who offers us his Infinite all—but deal simply with the element of unselfishness in our relations with our fellow-man. Will the apple-blossom be less slightly opening beside the windows of the sick to whom one has ministered, or the face of beauty be less illuminated by a glance of gratitude for consolation received?"

"Taking that as you state it, no; and assuredly I do not mean to be churlish or unkind in my own life. But to devote that life to unselfish action, as you are doing, would terribly interfere with the 'good time,' as we Americans say, that I mean to have if I live."

"Without wishing to prophesy, and sincerely desiring your happiness in every form, I must caution you, out of an experience of no more years than your own, that I have more than once observed that when a man made happiness-seeking his direct object, as you suggest, God has seen fit to spoil his 'good time,' and you will perhaps be surprised to know that in the end the discipline has been rather a cause of gratitude than of regret."

The speakers were a young American, just returned from Europe, and an Irish-American Catholic priest, former friends and for a time school companions. Elliott, possessed of a moderate fortune that enabled him to live almost elegantly as a bachelor, had spent some years abroad in travel and study; but scorning an idle

life, and greatly interested in chemistry and mechanics, he believed himself on the verge of some discoveries connected with the working of caoutchouc, and had sought the town of Bristol, R. I., that he might connect himself with the india-rubber factory in that place for the purpose of experimenting in the manipulation of the material.

Here he had by chance met his old friend and classmate, who was visiting the resident priest for a few days previous to taking charge of a neighboring parish over the Massachusetts boundary. They were walking along the main street of the lower part of the town when their conversation was for the moment interrupted by the barely avoided contact with two young girls who were descending a hilly cross-street which joined the principal one at right angles. Our friends raised their hats in apology and passed on without other observation; not so the girls, who, leaving a little distance between themselves and the gentlemen, began a series of comments in tones so slightly guarded that they reached the ears of the subjects of observation without break or interruption.

“Strangers,” said the first speaker; “and one of them is a Catholic priest.”

“Or a Ritualist,” said the other, “since the latter imitate so well; for my part I can’t tell one from the other.”

“Do you suppose they can themselves—that

is, the Catholics? And what do you suppose they think of them, any way?"

"They always seem to me like doubtful friends, these Ritualists, caressing with one hand to scourge with the other; but, as well as I can understand, the Catholics are very patient with them, and smile quietly at their little imitative ruses and attempts to persuade them of their fellowship, while in reality they work as energetically as other Protestants against them."

"What a fine-looking man the layman is!" said her companion, more interested in that fact than in the ecclesiastical question.

"I find the priest the handsomer of the two, decidedly," responded the other girl, "whatever sort of cleric he may be. It's a pity that he can't marry, if a Catholic he be."

At this point the delicacy of the parties under discussion could allow no farther eavesdropping, however unsought, and, by a glance given and received, they turned by mutual agreement, crossed the street, and walked out upon a pier built by a public-spirited Bristolian for no business purposes of his own, but to afford promenaders, yachtsmen, and, in fact, all craftsmen, facilities and enjoyment.

Elliott uttered an expression of annoyance at the chatter of the girls; the priest only smiled.

"The carelessness of our American girls becomes annoying to me," said Elliott, "because

it really belies and degrades them. In a European town or city such an occurrence would have been impossible."

"Yet you do not regret the condition of society that allows the freedom of the streets to unmarried women and insures their safety there?" said Father Hubert inquiringly.

"God forbid!" replied Elliott with emphasis, "or to any progress that our republic affords the sex. I rejoice in it all, but I sincerely deplore their abuse of the privilege. Why should not our girls be as reticent and lady-like as a class as a few of them are, as all well-bred English and French girls are, and conduct themselves with habitual modesty in public, on the street, at lectures, concerts, going to school and returning, on railway-trains and horse-cars? Yet you will not deny that you are often shocked in comparison, as any observer of foreign manners must be, at the careless, not to say bold, manners of American girls. I heard the remark made by one who wished to judge them kindly, 'Your American girls are so charming—until they open their mouths.'"

"Certainly, Elliott, I have often observed these things with pain; but I am hopeful that a better condition of affairs is commencing, and that you will soon observe a change in the common world from its introduction and prevalence in 'society' already. A few years ago parents who thought that they were careful of

their daughters allowed them to take drives of several hours' duration with young men, and young ladies of ordinary self-respect accepted such attentions. To our Catholic girls it was, of course, forbidden; but no later than last month I heard a young Protestant lay down the law 'that no girl who respected herself would go "buggy-riding" with any man, however friendly,' and the response 'of course' from several of her companions seemed a hopeful sign to me."

"It is to be desired," said Elliott, "for nothing has annoyed me more since I came home than the cheapening of themselves, so to speak, that I find among women of otherwise admirable character. I have little doubt that our fair friends who criticised us so freely just now did so without intention of being heard, yet such is the carelessness of untrained American nature that should they learn that their speech had reached us one or both would be quite capable of saying, 'I don't care'; yet very slight training would make them properly ashamed."

"I am thinking," said the priest, "of qualities that are often coupled with this same want of thought, though not necessarily. Suppose an accident had occurred to either of us, or to some other passer-by who had been less interesting, since we had a partisan each," he added, smiling, "how promptly and kindly both would have rendered their aid!"

"True enough," agreed Elliott. "There are no more generous beings or actively charitable than the women of our nation; but why should they not, as a part of their very superiority, soften their most high-pitched voices, and restrain their witty tongues in public, and carry the beneficence of their actions into their private judgments on all occasions? These are the most flagrant faults of their characters, and I confess that I wore through a party last night more than annoyed at the quality of the conversation that was forced upon me. Twelve out of seventeen ladies to whom I rendered the usual attentions beguiled me with town or family gossip, and the 'small talk' of the remainder was such as—to borrow from the words of a friend—'to prove that their large talk couldn't be much better.' In several cases I was able to lead conversation to a higher level, and the real intelligence and originality with which some entered into the topics proposed increased my wonder at their own choice of subjects. I am sure that it must be largely the want of instruction, whether at home or in books or society."

"And how responsible we all become, therefore, whose duty it is to present ideals," said Father Hubert—"priest, parent, teacher, friend. I believe that it is an endless wrong, of which every member of society is capable, to place a lower ideal of action before an-

other individual than that he is capable of attaining."

"The very old Hubert that you ever were," said Elliott, "or I would not hear it from you now. I should think that you were preaching, if when at school you were not always trying to keep everybody up to their very best; and for yourself, I believe that you never did anything since you were born to hurt your body or your soul." ^v

The keen clearing of the inward thought of self-examination brought so speedy response to the truly single-hearted man that he forgot the remark of his friend, and indeed all that had been said, as conscience, continuing to search in the inner chambers of the heart, pictured the man to himself as he would appear before the Divine inspection, and a blush of humility tinged his manly countenance.

Elliott, on the contrary, was rapidly turning over in his mind the events of Hubert's life and their effect on his character, beginning with their boy friendship in the school to which his father, a Protestant, had sent him. He thought of Hubert as the only Catholic there, his religion detested, but the boy beloved by teachers and pupils; of his honorable graduation; of his engagement to an estimable woman, whose death cast a deep shadow on Hubert's life, only to be succeeded by the sunlight that had made it beautiful in unselfishness ever

since; of his developing vocation for the priesthood, and his ordination, just completed when his maternal grandfather forgave the marriage of the son who had displeased him in wedding a Catholic, and offered to receive Arthur as his heir, his father now being dead; he promised to rescind the will that would have despoiled ~~him~~ ^{them} of the inheritance, if Father Hubert would come at once and live upon the Irish estates that he was so soon to leave; finally, of Arthur Hubert's refusal to renounce the life he had chosen for any earthly gain whatever, and so allowing the large property to pass into possession of a cousin rather than abandon the consecration that bound soul and body to the service of God.

And this was in Elliott's eyes heroic, and moved him to strong feeling as, looking out over the blue waters at his feet, the world did seem smaller and heaven closer, as his eye rested on the horizon of blue wave and green island and low-lying cloud. Then the two men roused themselves from their dissimilar reveries to find that their walking time was over, and that by brisk exertion only could they reach the train that was to convey Father Hubert to Fall River.





II.

A CLAM-BAKE.

A DOZEN miles or so above Newport, where Narragansett Bay throws a loving sweep between some islands and a point, there nestles the little town and harbor of Bristol. Sheltered in part only by the islands of Prudence, Chesawannoc, and Rhode Island, a seaward vista is opened between the former two, just near enough to show on a clear day the rocks named "Dumplings," crowned by old Fort Lewis, grand and ghostly in any distance, and thence to tempt the imagination out to the great Atlantic that washes beyond.

Standing on the steamboat wharf, you may at such times say, Down that royal pathway I look out to Africa, with only this harbor bar and those Newport rocks between. Nearer the gazer, and forming the western side of the harbor, is the little Poppasquash peninsula, whose other name, Pappoose-squaw, affords endless discussion, in idle hours of picnicking or clam-baking thereon, as to whether the squaws and their babies are actually taken there for protection in absence of their sachems on occasions of hunting or battle.

The point of Poppasquash seems to lap over upon the most northerly one of Prudence from the town view, though the broad Narragansett Bay rolls between, and the trend of the island is then to southward, and forms a headland as it advances in that direction, which is the only bold feature in the landscape; then the African vista, and after it, keeping to south and east, the Chesawannoc, one of the many round-backed "Hog" islands of our New England coast, lapping in its turn apparently upon the island of Rhode Island, where white sails of windmills and the lazy blue smoke of coal-mines and copper smelting dot in picturesquely.

The rest of the view from this spot is townward, and happiest where the ancient wharves are most obscured by coasting schooners or yachts, and the attention thus diverted from the unpoetic dwellings of Thames Street by the water to the elm tops of the shady parallel above.

It is a peaceful little town—we have heard it named "dull." Like the pretty scenery with which it blends, it is a spot that many strangers learn to love and constantly return to. After mountain scenery it certainly is tame; but if strong natures love to maintain their inward struggles and fortify their fatigued beings with the "ozone" of higher altitudes, they delight to seek the repose that follows in such a

spot as this. "What a beautiful place to grow old in!" was the comment of one who had left it only and ever to return and renew the charm.

"No wonder people forget to die here," said another, reading the annals of unwonted longevity, the boast of Bristol for generations. Yet we would not dispute those who pronounce the town "dull"; we would merely add that some do not find it so.

Perhaps the charm is invisible that has drawn many a voyager who has weathered severe storms in life to seek this port, finding in this little harbor a true soul-haven as well. Perhaps the sympathy of such natures in greater numbers than usually pertain to a single community has given a deeper tone to the life therein; perhaps the keener appreciations of these experienced souls have quickened the perceptions of their associates and stimulated the belief that the common events of life render a richer harvest than the usual yields; but true it is that the dwellers themselves declare that "life never stagnates in Bristol."

"There is always something happening in Bristol" is a hackneyed comment of summer visitors who beg for winter correspondence, and grave and wise sojourners have declared that the undercurrent of social life courses through tragedies, even like those that mark the profounder depths of great cities. We

believe that this is so, but incline to shut our eyes to the truth in its details, lest the sight rest upon pain that we are helpless to remove, or on sorrow too deep to witness while we are powerless to relieve, or sin unrepented of and maintained.

Whatever depths we shall have to fathom later, we have happily to consider only youth and supposable innocence in Bristol to-day; for we accompany Robert Elliott to a clam-bake with a summer party, to some of whom, from an inland Western city, the affair is wholly novel. Private carriages are rolling out of the town to northward carrying the Pickerings, of Bristol, who are "making the bake" for the entertainment of their friends, the Chesters, of Providence, and the Chesters' cousins, the Brenners from the West.

Closely following the carriages runs a small, springless omnibus hight "Fairy," which has gathered up sundry guests who could not otherwise be arranged for. Among these are Elliott and Joe Pickering, Noel Chester and his sister "June," and Miss Lizzie Ashford, the reputed "belle" of Bristol, though the title is sometimes disputed by admirers of other belles, who amiably concede the second place to Lizzie.

On to northward for a few moments only, then, abruptly sweeping to westward, they follow the curve that forms the head of the harbor.

"What a salt-sea smell!" says June Chester, leaning forward and inhaling largely; "and I'm sure that those bunches of algæ that you call 'rockweed' here are giving out volumes of iodine to-day."

"I thought that I caught a whiff from the fish-works on Prudence Island," prosaically observed her brother Noel.

"You dreadful boy!" screamed a chorus.

"Can you take the poetry as well out of vision," asked Lizzie Ashford, "when you look at those tawny, clinging masses of rockweed? See, they transform that rock yonder into a lion's head and mane, and the brown masses in shadow run out into heavy, out-stretched paws!"

"The prettiest picture of rockweed is under a sail-cloth and over a bed of steaming clams," replied Noel, determined to be fully practical.

By this time, still following the shore curve, they had rolled into the Willow Walk, where the road, bordered with ancient trees of this kind, opened between the rude framing of their knotty trunks and pale olive leafage a succession of pictures, of which sky and sea were rivals in sapphire and turquoise tints, and the middle distance was first green islands, then pretty Bristol—truly a gem in the distance, with its variety of roof and spire and lines of elm-shaded streets.

Robert Elliott thought of points on the Riviera of which he was slightly reminded, and told Lizzie Ashford "that if he could transform the northward meadows to a chain of mountains the feeling would be much the same, especially should he view the sea and sky with half-closed eyes through the willow foliage, so like olives in effect." Then, finding her interested, he went on to describe the olive harvest, and the fisher-peasants, with scarlet Phrygian caps gracefully pendent to one side, dotting the beaches among the drawn-up boats, or shining out from the trees as they gathered the delicate fruit.

"When I was a little boy," said Joe Pickering, "I wanted to come and live in that hole in the willow yonder. It seemed to me that I should feel so snug with only the bark and Church's wall between me and the water, and hear the waves always washing at the roots."

"What is that lovely green growing in such masses out in the water, yet close to the road?" called a Brenner voice from a carriage in front.

"Samphire," said Joe as the omnibus came near. "And in autumn it's lovelier still; its stems turn scarlet and are transparent, and the rest is a mass of golden tint before its final withering."

"I thought samphire only grew on cliffs, and that people gathered it in dreadful

peril, let down precipices by ropes ! It isn't half so interesting to think that this is samphire and that you could pick it kneeling down in the sand and stones," said June Chester.

"This may not be the same," retorted Joe, "but 'I tell it you as 'twas told to me,' and it isn't my fault if this is not its moment of beauty. If you could see it in October you would be glad that you need not risk your neck to get it."

Soon after the samphire corner the public road ends in a closed lane where two private gates are usually—open.

"Which territory do we invade?" called the foremost driver, a visitor, not a little surprised at this culmination.

"To the right." And then they encountered another corner, dark, even in this wealth of sunlight, from the low shade of apple-boughs; another farm invaded, more open gates, and a half-mile of meadow and lane, then with a burst came the shore, that had been hidden for the last mile, and under a cedar-crowned granite ledge they saw the sands of Usher's Cove.

Like a kaleidoscope, only with definite and meaning form, changed the busy throng, jumping from carriage and omnibus, greeting and grouping, and separating and grouping anew, unpacking baskets, spreading carriage-rugs and

Afghans, and a few who could not resist dashing down to the water's edge to race with the rise and fall of the tide-waves, or dip their hands, or throw flat stones, edge on, so that they would "skip" or rebound from the water.

Others, more patient, bestowed the bundles, and directly the gray stone ledge cropping out between moss and turf and cedar was alive with strange butterflies of gay shawl and scarf.

"But the clams, Joey Pickering—where are the clams?" eagerly asks Elisa Brenner, one of the Western strangers, desirous of witnessing the process of the "bake" from beginning to end.

"Under the protection of yon grinning son of Neptune, who looks 'a charge to keep I have' out of every muscle of his important face."

He stood to windward of a smoking heap which Elisa was prompt to declare a hecatomb and to pretend a search for bones, when the cleared-away ashes revealed only a hollow of heated stones.

"Not a phosphate there, bone or bivalve," called Joe.

"But will be presently," responded Noel Chester, tugging at his side of a huge basket of clams, the other supported by a boy, an adjunct to the fisherman who was to superin-

tend the mysteries. "Oh! how many," said Elisa and Joe in a breath, as the pile was increased by renewed basketfuls. "Who will eat so many?"

"Guess you never got a clam appetite outdoors," observed Neptune, now engaged in piling over the clams the same rockweed that Lizzie had likened to a lion's mane. "Besides," he added, "your mind's a measurin' the shells, which an't eaten."

Covering the rockweed finally with a sail-cloth, the fisherman gave himself to the watching, while the adjunct stacked other baskets in which green corn had been brought to be buried in the roast with the clams. The guests devoted themselves to the water and its sparkle, the beauty of sails near or far, the canvas of distant coasters beyond Chesawan-noc or spread on lively yachts skimming the harbor's surface.

"It is a day," said Elliott, "to enjoy minute by minute, to the full, perfect weather, perfect health, summer by shore and sea, and all of us young and presumably happy."

"And to remember as well as to enjoy," chimed in Edmond Brenner, a youth of sixteen, but who thought ahead of his years sometimes. "It always seems to me that such glory-days as these must be given us like a harvest to glean from in memory when age or darker days cast shadows."

“When one is as happy as one can be, can anything make one happier?” asked Joey Pickering, laughing directly at the absurdity of his proposition, which, however, contained a truth so well understood that no attempt was made at correction.

Two faces lengthened a little at the speech, those of Noel Chester and Lizzie Ashford. Noel's late promotion in the counting-room of his father, a wholesale merchant in iron and steel, had just made marriage a possibility; but the one incomparable woman of the world to him was his cousin, Elisa Brenner, and she was a Catholic, nor would she have married her cousin had she been other. Beside her beauty that of most women paled, and Lizzie Ashford's was in comparison that of a day-star fading before the rising sun. It was Robert Elliott's glance of unconcealed admiration, as it burst upon him in his introduction to Elisa just now, that had caused the gravity on Lizzie's face.

When Lizzie herself had been introduced to Robert a year before, the friend performing the office had mischievously pronounced her a “flirt,” and Robert's response, “Forewarned, forearmed,” had gracefully bridged an awkward moment. Thereafter any casual attentions on his part were not to be misconstrued by Lizzie, and Robert was cautious that there should be no marked ones. Gossip and lynx-

eyed maidens declared that this was no fault of Lizzie's; that, under the pretext afforded by the banter at this introduction, Lizzie's advances had been more than those of mere flirtation; that, in short, she was finally "hit," while Elliott's manner defied interpretation. No one certainly could accuse him of real preference, nor could it be said that he was wanting in response to many of Lizzie's overtures. But he seemed to know that there was a safe side, and to maintain it. In reality he was not touched, but a little flattered, and meant to enjoy what he safely could and no more. He could honestly say that he had never spoken a word in his life that should cause any woman to dream of his love or of marriage; yet he was conscious of being a pleasing man to women in general, nor did he feel obliged to veil his nature, which was an affectionate one. He kept it within bounds, drawing his honorable lines. Who does better?

It fell to him to initiate Elisa Brenner into the manner of eating clams; and the fragrance from the now uncovered bivalves had for several minutes appealed to stomachs that were near hearts that knew no sentiment, and the company sat down at some rudely-extemporized tables that had been swiftly constructed of planking and supports brought along for the purpose on the top of the omnibus.

Slices of brown bread being distributed, and

melted butter held in readiness, the clams were brought on.

“Only a few at a time, Miss Brenner, and often renewed, that they may be hot,” said Robert. “One of the perfections of a clam-dinner consists in the activity of the waiters to this end.”

“Next,” he added, seeing her take up her fork, “you will forego that trident; fingers to clams—see, this way.” And he removed the delicious morsel from its couch of shell, dipped it in the butter, and conveyed it to his mouth, biting just short of the black neck-line that seems made for a finger-hold, without the least offence to delicacy.

“Why, that is real Indian, isn’t it?” said Elisa, smiling, but succeeding admirably in a first attempt.

“The clam is far too dainty a morsel to approach with metal of any sort,” said Robert; “besides, the delay of cutting off the neck would cool it. If the process seem rude or rapid, let me assure you that only last week I saw it fully adopted by a party of distinguished gentlemen and ladies. Two members of Congress and a general of the U. S. Army initiated a bishop, who managed admirably, as I see that you are doing. In fact, the Rhode-Islanders believe that only under-bred people make an ado about the matter.”

“Are they not delicious, Edmond?” asked

Elisa, turning toward her brother; but this question was unheard, as interposing hands brought on the smoking corn and roasted sweet potatoes, permeated with mingled steam of rockweed and clam, their kindred in the hot-stone roast. And when the latest clams suggested a mild thirst it was allayed, while but suspected, by cool, delicious watermelons cleft to their pomegranate-like hearts.

The darting to and from the clam-heap by agile boys in waiting, the hurried removal of piles of shells before the plates, the chorus of voices rising merrily above these sounds, and the good-humored inquiries of the native Rhode-Islanders—whom to malign their clams is to put outside the pale of sympathy—kept all guests on the alert pleasantly.

“If you don’t like our clams, Edmond,” said Noel Chester, “at least pretend to. As soon deride the Burgundies of Côte d’Or to a Frenchman as despise our shore fruit.”

“You speak safely,” responded Edmond; “they are beyond praise, as my mother often told me in recounting the ‘shore parties’ of her youth as tales to us in our forest home. The happenings on or about this bay were the fairy tales of our nursery, and now we are really in an enchanted land of which we used to dream.”

We will not shock the critic by portraying the dinner at length. No one is fit to judge

who has not shared the temptation presented to this party of hungry, happy youth. As they retreated from the table the piles of shells would have been the occasion of remark to any but veterans, and as they passed the "chef" he drew himself up with an air of knowledge, addressing Elisa and Joey, by chance in company again :

" What do you think of the quantity now ? "

" I am almost ashamed of having eaten more than I ever did in my life," said she simply, at which Neptune laughed and seemed content.

Now came searches for treasures left by the fallen tide—water-worn stones, curious bits of algæ, a few tiny yellow shells, a stranded starfish ; even the mussel-shells were pretty in their purple to eyes that looked on them for the first time.

Joey Pickering hollowed tiny cups from large bulbs of rockweed, and Noel taught the girls to press those uncut to tiny explosions. Edmond Brenner, with a pocket-set of water-colors, made memoranda and a hasty study of the ledge of cedars for home explanation, and the day had gone like a dream when the first mention of return was made. As usual, the general comments prevailed : " Where has the time gone ? How it has flown ! "

" Elisa must sing before we go," said Squire Pickering, the host of the occasion. Elisa's day in Bristol had been the only one that she

could give from a week in Providence, and that was farewell between the closing of musical studies in New York and those that she was about to commence in Europe. She was to sail in the *Scotia* ten days later, with a dawning reputation which, at her age—eighteen—was sufficient to awaken more than interest in the musical circles of the metropolis.

She lent herself heartily to the gratification of her companions, singing the simple old sea-songs that were Squire Pickering's favorites as readily as if all opera and classical music were unknown to her; and finally, at Noel's entreaty, a composition of her own.

It was the song of a young Neapolitan fisher who has been out on the Mediterranean, and, as he draws his boat up on shore and would turn inland, is arrested by all the beauty that the Bay of Naples spreads out before him. First the island of Capri calls him back with its hazy blue in which it appears at the moment; next it is the chain of little towns and villages nestling at the volcano's foot; then some other charm of sea or sky newly observed. Finally he apostrophizes great Vesuvius itself, with its heart of fire, as something more living than all the rest, but ever returning to the refrain after each verse, like a chorus :

“ And sunlight, God's bright smile, over all.”

A boat of other fishers, far out on the still

waters, hear and join each time in this chorus; and this part of the song was sung by Elisa and Noel and Edmond, the latter having moved a little apart from the others, and modulating their voices so as to produce a fine effect as of distance. The company were delighted, and Lizzie Ashford was eager in questioning Edmond about his sister's voice and plans.

“If she were more at home I would ask her to improvise,” he said, “since she has this power, like my father, of composing rapidly and well in moments of strong feeling; but—” The summons to the carriages cut the sentence short, and Lizzie did not care what it would have been when she saw Robert Elliott enter the Pickering carriage with Elisa and others, while Edmond took the place in the omnibus that was thus vacated. For the first time in her life Lizzie was jealous.





III.

REMINISCENCES.

IF we could turn back a page of eight years in Robert Elliott's life we should see him a college student in a New England town in his sophomore year. In an idle hour he entered one day into a Catholic church through no greater temptation or deeper interest than that of seeing the door ajar. But once inside his attention was drawn to a little girl kneeling before a statue of the Blessed Virgin and weeping bitterly. Her attitude and her sad face fixed his own attention for a time, and then he looked about the church awhile, finally returning to his first post of observation. He found that his interest in the child had been sufficient to induce a very palpable relief when he saw the sobs grow less and the tears cease to flow, and a look, if not of brightness, quite calm and peaceful come over the little face and settle there.

Then he saw that the face was a pleasing one, even promising beauty some day ; and as the little worshipper rose to leave the church, seeing that she was only a child of ten, he managed to meet her at the door, and, observ-

ing her dip her finger into the font, stopped the inquiry that he would have made, and asked an explanation instead. It was the first time that he had ever been inside a Catholic church.

“It is a font, and this is holy water,” said the child, blessing herself.

“And why is the church open to-day, since it is not Sunday?”

“It is open all the days,” said the child, “and we come whenever we like, as often as we are troubled and want to pray, as well as on Sundays.”

“And what trouble was so grave, little one, that you could not keep it three days, since to day is Thursday?”

“I do not know that I ought to tell, since I left it in there,” said the child, with a graceful inclination of her little head.

“You seemed to be in real trouble,” continued Robert, fairly interested; “and has it really gone?”

“Oh! yes,” said the child, with a bright, sunny look; “that is, the pain has. The trouble comes back nearly as often as I go to school; but I get grace to bear it. Our dear Lord's Mother never refuses to obtain it for a Christian child.”

“I suspect that some of your schoolmates are unkind,” pursued Robert, bent on sifting the experience that, so simple, was yet one of the most curious to him that he had ever met.

“ Sometimes,” said she shyly. “ They hide my books, and ink the clean, new ones, and fill my glove-fingers with stones and sand that I cannot get out and always work back under the nails, and they eat my lunches. But those little things I do not long consider. It is only when they speak in derision of bonne-mamma and poor mamma in heaven that it piques so sorely as to-day.”

“ And of what bad things do they accuse them?” asked Robert in the tone of a defender.

“ Oh!” said she, fearing to have made too grave a charge, “ not quite that; they could not. Mamma was a true saint while she lived, and bonne-mamma is of the *ancien régime*.” And here the little creature drew her figure to a height, and spoke the words with an intonation, that would have translated to Robert the sentiment of the phrase had he been a less advanced French scholar or well read for a youth in French history.

“ But they ridicule my name—Euzelle; and to-day they asked mamma's, which was Michelle; and when I came in at recess the blackboard was full of bad pictures, with our names below—‘ Ouzel, daughter of Souzel’; and my hair was drawn as a mop. They don't like my curls, and I can't brush them straight.”

Then a tear rose up at the remembrance.

“And bonne-mamma—what do they dislike in her?”

Here the little head bent low and the cheeks grew very red.

“Bonne-mamma is—a—foreigner!”

No pen can portray the tone in which the last dread word was pronounced, picturing the scorn and contempt with which Euzelle's schoolmates had invested it.

“And what were their own grandmamas and ancestors? Indians?” said Robert indignantly—“since all others must have been foreigners.”

With a desperate effort at honesty mingled with relief, the child added: “And I am a foreigner, too, but only half. Papa is American and goes to the best places.”

“And do you not go to the best places too?” asked Robert, amused at the phraseology borrowed from her schoolmates.

“No more,” said she, falling back to her idiom and first sad tones. “I tried a few times, but the glances and words aside of the ladies, and their strange questions, reproached bonne-mamma and Suzanne.”

“And who is Suzanne?”

“She was mamma's own maid, and has served our family for thirty years.”

“And how was she reproached?”

“Bonne-mamma does not think the present costumes of young ladies desirable, so Suzanne

composes mine ; and this the ladies, old and young, find ridiculous, as also that I never go out alone. Suzanne accompanies me to school, and will bring me from church directly. See, she comes," cried the child ; then, with sudden misgiving, "and I have been talking too long with a stranger."

The keen glance of inquiry between child and man from the eyes of the servant compelled a graceful apology from Robert, which but half satisfied her, and she hurried her charge away.

Occasionally after this Robert met the child on her way to school or church, but the nurse's vigilance discouraged anything beyond the friendly salutation that he always smiled forth to her. Some time during the next college year Robert, being ill, discovered in his physician, Dr. Fernald, the father of his little friend of a moment, and, cultivating his acquaintance, became for a few weeks a visitor at his house.

Here for a brief time he was permitted to look upon a manner of living quite unlike any with which he was familiar. Madame de Montmorenci, presiding over the household of her son-in-law, had been able, with the assistance of Suzanne, to drill an Irish maid and a boy of sixteen into such attainments that the customs of a French ménage were passably imitated. The native traits of these domestics, however, developed on Ameri-

can soil, came ludicrously in conflict with full French ceremonial, and no coaxing or persuasion could induce Patrick, in announcing dinner, to say in form, "Madame is served." Whenever custom did not conflict with ideal independence, however, it was readily adopted; and with keen delight Robert was introduced to an order of things that in later years he renewed with like pleasure in Europe.

In half a dozen visits he became strongly attached to the child whose acquaintance he had made in the church, and, no longer a stranger, he had often a flower or trivial gift to offer in the chance street-encounters.

After a long summer vacation Robert returned to college to learn of Dr. Fernald's death and the disappearance of the family, without being able to obtain their address. Shunned by those of lower culture and of hostile faith, Madame had too carefully screened herself from visitors to make acquaintances at the age of seventy, and those of the doctor had been chiefly office-met. Robert's own enthusiasm and fondness for Euzelle had gone far towards making him the family's exceptional friend.

For a time he had missed them greatly; then, with the ardor of youth, threw himself into study and such recreations as he enjoyed, and in his budding love of practical chemistry drifted away from the pain, and later lost it in

the deeper sorrow that followed his mother's death. But it had always remained a memory, and in France he had gone so far as to visit the possessions that had once been those of the Count—Madame had laid down her title in republican America.

Emigrés though they were—how much more aristocratic is an *émigré* than an emigrant!—they had been happier in foresight than many victims of their day and time, and the Count de Montmorenci had been able to sell enough of his lands at a sacrifice to place a round sum in American securities before his exile and death. Euzelle would one day be an heiress, but of this Robert knew nothing. Only her face and friendship had so imprinted itself on his memory that it had never faded, and had been sufficient to make those even of older girls, known later in life, in some way unsatisfying, and greatly assisted a resolution that he had made—viz., to take marriage, if he ever greatly wished it, as a good gift from Heaven, but never to seek it as an end in itself.

From the moment of meeting Miss Brenner on the morning of the clam-bake to that in which he begged the privilege of returning with her to Bristol in the carriage, he had found himself continually recalling his college days and connecting them with her in some inexplicable way.

As soon as the silence of a few moments had given him time for thought he was able to detect the link. It was a resemblance between the features of his child-friend of eight years ago and the far more beautiful Miss Brenner.

Robert, whose real excuse for seeking Elisa's company had been to converse with her on her plans for study abroad, and to offer her some introductions that would serve her in Leipzig and Paris, fell into speaking German as a great pleasure also.

"It is such a delight to renew one's acquaintance with a foreign tongue that is associated with bright hours in life," said he; then, as the memory of the past renewed itself, he spoke abruptly: "Your face, Miss Brenner, reminds me of a child that I used to know, whom I cannot help naming, therefore. Can it be that you are in any way related to a Miss Fernald?"

"I have a cousin of the name not nearly related to me, since her father was not even a first cousin of my mother's; yet Euzelle and I are thought to be a little alike."

"Euzelle! It is she, my little, lost friend!" And Robert pressed hurried inquiries. He learned that after Dr. Fernald's death Madame had returned to New Rochelle, a former residence, where she had remained until her own death, a year ago; that Euzelle had become an attractive young lady, now eighteen years old.

"She is a very lovable girl," said Elisa, "and I remember hearing some one say that 'Miss Fernald would be the most popular girl in her circle of associates, if she cared enough about it.'"

"And does she not care to be loved?" asked Robert.

"Oh! it's not quite that," said Elisa, too artless herself to be an analyst of character. "She's as kind and lovable as possible, but she never makes a show in any way, and would not know why anybody liked her if they did, and would think it to be out of their own goodness, while in reality no one who knows her can help it." This came slowly and in pauses, as Elisa felt her way among her own thoughts. Then, after a longer interval, "I think that she would be what people call 'brilliant' if she tried or cared; but she never thinks of herself at all, and she told me once that when she was a little girl she was often laughed at, and that hardly any one out of their own household loved her."

"Oh! I can explain that," said Robert promptly. "Madame—or the Countess, as she really was, you know—dressed her in an old-fashioned foreign style. I thought, the first time I saw her, that she was like an old picture that had left its frame; and she, with her dainty, high-born French manners, was placed with children of vulgar prejudices, wholly un-

appreciative and unsympathetic. Poor Madame herself so shrank from these natures that her house was a fortified castle to approach ; and what she, in age and much independence of character, loftily turned aside from this child had to bear. She had no one to explain except her grandmother and Suzanne, who looked upon the whole as *canaille* and to be tolerated for a few necessary hours, then ignored ; or Dr. Fernald, a quiet man, who met the difficulty by doubling his own devotion to, and indulgence of, his daughter. I used to think that there never could be two such utterly opposing worlds as those in which Euzelle lived—that beautiful one from which she went out, and the tantalizing, rude school-life, which she bore with astonishing fortitude."

Robert had modestly omitted a championship of his own that had served the child on more than one occasion and had mightily impressed her with a sense of his kindness and power.

Here Elisa remembered a fact of interest. "Why, Euzelle has been in Bristol at least twice!" said she. "Madame de Montmorenci retained to her death the friendship of a lady that she had known in France—a Madame Martial, whom I have seen at their house when visiting Euzelle, and who lives in Bristol. The two old ladies used to delight in talking over the stirring historic times in which

they had lived, Madame de Montmorenci full of tales of the Revolution, and her friend, widow of a surgeon on Napoleon's staff, no less animated in later reminiscences. Euzelle had formed a habit of rapid translation to me in a low tone as we listened, almost as swift as their speech, and I hardly dared to draw my breath for fear of losing some detail. Euzelle told me that once she had seen and held the pistols, gold-mounted, that Napoleon had given to Surgeon Martial during the celebrated retreat from Moscow, which, with many other treasures—tapestry, porcelain, furniture, pictures—are preserved in the house in Bristol."

Miss Brenner's own beautiful face and voice were alike forgotten in the souvenirs that she recalled, and a silence followed the conversation so lively heretofore—a silence on his part involuntary—and, unnoticed, Elisa was soon talking with the other occupants of the carriage.

In bidding his acquaintance of a day the good-by that was to last so long, he did not fail to obtain her cousin's address or to express the gratification she had afforded him in so many ways, and returned to his boarding-place full of musings and curious anticipations.

Robert had found a temporary home with a widowed lady properly addressed as Mrs. Rus-

sell, but better known among friends as Cousin Cynthia, her formal title being nearly abandoned to strangers. She was called by some "a character," by others "a mystery," and by a minor few "a hateful old thing," and was liked or disliked according to the side of her nature that was approached. "There are people whose aversion is more complimentary than their liking," she used to say herself. The world at large approved of Cynthia Russell, and declared that those who did not had merited the setting forth that her lively vein of criticism rarely applied to individuals, but when so applied was of withering force.

Her house was the frequent rendezvous of a number of young girls, who did not discontinue their visits after the coming of her boarder, nor had she grown less popular in consequence. In, fact she would sometimes say that "half of them came to see her, the other half to fish for Robert"; and when other jests failed she would sometimes cynically report to him the number of visits that she pretended had been received in his absence.

"Only three offers to-day," was her announcement on Robert's return from the bake; for she was wont to intimate that the girls' intentions were matrimonial collectively, though never by hint or innuendo was her "fun" pointed at an individual. Jest

she might and bring her little cynicisms to bear for his amusement and her own; but never could a girl that entered her door be less respected or beloved by others for any word that left her lips in personal application.

“Only three?” said Robert, taking up her speech. “We must be waning in popularity, Cousin Cynthia. What have we done, or may we soothe our wounded pride with the suspicion of caprice on the part of our mutual adorers?”

For, isolate the tribute as she would, Robert always assumed and took refuge in a partnership of attentions received.

“Perhaps you've been careless,” she continued—“calling twice consecutively in some unwonted place, or walking an exceptional square further with some girl out of rotation. But you've no appetite to-night, Mr. Elliott.”

Robert, with glance and gesture, uttered full explanation in a single word, naming the State dainty—“clams.” It was sufficient, and the intelligent “Oh!” from Mrs. Russell indicated, as by a kind of freemasonry, complete understanding.

“A charming day and no gossip,” he added, summing up.

Without being conscious of doing so, Robert had carefully avoided mention of his new-

ly-discovered former friend to Cousin Cynthia, of whom, in common with others, he was wont to make a confidant; and he as unconsciously revealed to her that something unspoken of occupied his thoughts, by studying the elms on the Common as seen from her windows in the moonlight, notwithstanding they presented no abnormal developments on that particular evening, then making apparently irrelevant inquiries about a Madame Martial, to him a hitherto unknown resident of Bristol.

He was reviving his memories of the college days into which a then charming episode had been woven in the semi-foreign, semi-American experiences of his friendship with Dr. Fernald.

He reviewed the stateliness and ceremonies of the household, which would have been a little appalling but for the elegance of his own home (he was of a rich Baltimorean family), and the affability of the Countess, who recognized pleasing traits in the youth, as well as correct social habits, and set him at ease. He recalled the pleasant discussions with Dr. Fernald on the questions of the day, political, social, and local; the doctor's interest in Robert's chemical tastes. And especially pictures presented themselves of which Euzelle was the centre; the little head of waving, soft brown hair, on which Dr. Fer-

nald's hand loved to rest, nestling beside him as she seemed to listen with her blue eyes raised to the speaker's, talking above her comprehension. But she knew that at the end there would be a portion for her, unless some incoming patient sent her with Robert to bonne-mamma's salon.

In the fulness of the memories of these pleasant interviews Robert astonished himself by finding that there had been less than a dozen of them in which the child had borne a particular part; the rest were office-calls or street-encounters, when Suzanne, continuing the gracious exception made by Madame, countenanced the brief chats or trivial gifts which Robert knew how to offer discreetly; and once his lucky star had enabled him to discover in season that her, "jour," or festival that the French celebrate in place of a birthday, was near, and to present her, with the customary bon-bons, a really pretty little work-box fitted with articles of finest quality—delicate scissors, a prettily-chased thimble, silk-winders of carved pearl, a velvet needle-book with embroidered leaves.

"Bonne-mamma" had pronounced it "a fairy tale," but saw only its suitability for her dainty grandchild and the good taste which had selected it. This was on the third or fourth visit made to the family, and from this moment they had tacitly adopted him. In the brief time of

remaining friendship there had ensued something like intimacy, and with the effort that Robert made a panorama of pictured memories crowded his mental vision, clustering around a child whose grave dignity would have been extreme save for the sweetness that toned it and an innocence that was only a development of that of infancy.

She was a queen, a baby-queen, thought Robert, as the picture took words. "How gracefully she presided at table the last time I saw her, in the illness and absence of Madame! Bonne-mamma herself could not have shown more dignity." And he smiled as he recalled Patrick lifting the teapot for her, not quite able to straighten his own mouth. No one on whom her eyes could rest would have been so wanting in courtesy, yet Robert's own gravity had nearly failed when the child pretended not to see the boy's approach at her right for the renewal of papa's cup of tea, and motioned him to the proper place, whispering, to spare his feelings: "To my left, Patrick—to my left!"

He remembered her fondness for flowers, and the careful division that she had more than once made of those that he had given her between "bonne-mamma" and the little shrine that she had once led him to see in her own room—a room that he saw again, all white and gold in its draperies and decorations, with

a few touches of blue in details that he could not recall. The Countess' taste, admirable throughout the house, was shown here with peculiar delicacy.

The clock struck eleven as Robert concluded his reverie with the thought, "How could I have let it all slip away so easily?" And his answer, that he was a young man with a hundred new interests crowding him, did not satisfy the inquiry until he recalled the one grief of his life in his mother's death.

"Did it all turn out as you wished?" asked Cousin Cynthia, breaking silence for the first time in half an hour, and in her own queer fashion hinting that he had been dreaming.

"Not at all," said he. "I should like to find the end of a lost thread again." And as they exchanged good-nights she said to herself: "He'll find it, now that he's begun to search; but whether it'll tangle or reel off smooth who shall say? Life's been nothing but still water to him so far."





IV.

THE "CHURCH-BAKE."

WITHOUT pretending to explain the fact, we assert, without fear of dispute, that an annual clam-bake given by the ladies of the Episcopal church in Bristol has attained a State-wide celebrity; and since so many sons and daughters of Rhode Island habitually exile themselves abroad, the church-bake, as it is familiarly called among its patrons, has enjoyed a limited European reputation. Perhaps a more important element of success in the reduction of a debt that is ever being but is never paid by its celebration lies in its popularity with a class of citizens of the near capital, Providence, who patronize it to an extent that renders the running of extra trains a necessity, and to many of the busy workers in preparation this little bazaar and picnic is the festival of the year.

The congregation go in families, frequently taking infants and domestics, making it a matter of principle to nourish their households on that day from the tables of provision or at the great common bake, to increase the revenues of the occasion.

“Is it that the church is *rôti*?” asked a young Frenchman, in his initiative summer knowledge striving to make sense of the formula constantly repeated in his hearing.

His landlady had modestly asked contributions from her guests; each of his young lady friends had intimated their expectation of his patronage; sundry gentlemen had discussed the selection of the day before him, and consulted the almanac with reference to the phases of the moon, all announcing to him the approach of an event of unwonted interest. Before its arrival interest had led him to a remote portion of the country, where, retaining a mixed memory of the additions suddenly acquired in his dawning vocabulary, he discourses to credulous Californians of Eastern customs. “The tea-and-coffee table, meat table, fancy articles, tents, clam-chowder, Floral Temple, pretty girls, and dear cigars”—which he recognized and learned as cigars beloved (*cheriés*)—mingling with such Episcopal ideas as were also new and strange to him, the prevailing sentiment being that of a brief, jovial pilgrimage.

As the acquaintance of all the “eligible” young ladies in Bristol society, Robert Elliott was not one to be dispensed with on such an occasion by such of them as attended St. Michael’s by the Sea, and there was rivalry among them as to the distinctive service into

which he was to be pressed. The clam-baking and chowder-making was the work of professionals, so was the setting-up of tables by carpenters; but a vast amount of voluntary labor was yet required on the auspicious day itself, for which the toils at committee meetings for three previous months had been only sufficient, and each set of ladies sought to impress the most desirable service and nicest taste before the arrival of the visiting, lucrative world.

The grounds, on the edge of the town, loaned for the occasion were the property of a branch of the old De Wolf family, and known as Fox Hill, and were nearly as wild as when the creature from which they were named ran freely through its expanse of rock and hill and valley, beautiful especially in groups or thickets of cedar. One grassy clearing bloomed in civilized contrast with tables of luxurious viands and useful or elegant articles for sale; and here the prettiest costumes of the year were displayed. Here no sea-fog could render limp the dainty muslins, silks and satins were screened from the rocky seats by cushion or shawl; and the modistes of great cities unwittingly wrought that fair ladies might outdo each other in this wild spot, it being voted "dress occasion" by summer visitors.

In the centre of all arose the Floral Temple, an airy construction of flowers and green

whose apparent purpose was to accommodate the venders of buttonhole-bouquets ; but Cousin Cynthia had, in quoting this to Robert, observed dryly that " it required more surrounding to sell flowers at Fox Hill than on the trays of street dealers." And he was not slow to perceive that this edifice was intended for a shrine of beauty presided over by the youngest or prettiest girls. It was to aid in its construction that he had finally been detailed, and some hints of his as to roofing and draping with various flags had been accepted.

" Now let us take our places and see if we understand ourselves," said Emmy Pickering, spreading a final napkin over a final basket destined for the bouquets.

" If you can do that you can effect what we gentlemen are never able to," said Ned Barnes in the commonplace manner of youth.

" You should take a lesson from the crows, Ned," said Emmy rather good-naturedly, while he, professing bewilderment, was enlightened by little Tom Brooks' contemptuous " Pooh ! that's old. Don't you see, Ned, they never open their mouths without caws ? "—which left Mr. Barnes as blank as he deserved, and made a melancholy impression on Robert as he reflected on the quality of the remarks to which he would listen during the day.

" Surely," said he reflectively, " the bow

must unbend ; one does not require gravity of speech for ever, and what misery it would be to banish the sportive trifles born of lightness of heart ! ” But he knew that he would rather remember Emmy as he had known her the night before, when her enthusiasm over his translation of Schiller’s “ Song of the Bell ” had been praiseworthy, and, in presenting to her two forms of translation of a delicate shading of difference, her choice so accorded with his own as to exhibit real taste and intelligence.

“ And the same girl punning in obsolete form with that blockhead Ned Barnes ! ”

Then he shook himself into action with a query : “ Am I growing a cynical, cross old bachelor, or do these admirable girls spoil themselves in trivialities that a mother’s or teacher’s hint would change, at least in expression ? ” And he thought of his own “ incomparable ” mother, as he ever named her—of her fine spirits, that were the delight of her social circle, but were incapable of giving offence in any way ; of her bright repartees, that never wounded, and the dignity that, without stooping, blended with a sweetness that made her accessible to the humblest—and he said, in spoken words : “ O mother ! you have spoiled them all for me.”

His abstraction was rudely ended ; he had wandered into the limited carriage-path, and

the endless chain of arrivals was now beginning that marked the incoming train that reached the town at midday. Carryalls from the farms, phaetons and pony vehicles from town, to be followed by a few elegant and ponderous carriages of summer residents, were varied by the yellow omnibus and extemporized conveyances of all kinds, meant to cheapen the transit of strangers.

"Ten cents admission to the grounds" saluted the arrival at the bars, which usually maintained the cattle precincts, but were now lowered and gave great delight to city people, who felt doubly rural at this point. Grave discussions as to this toll took place from time to time, but the argument that served one side, "Let them in free; they'll bring about so much and spend it on the grounds anyway," was battledored back by the opposition valiantly, "They'll bring and spend just so much, toll or no toll, but it keeps out the rabble who spend nothing at all."

So the rabble slunk covertly along the stone walls, and entered slyly in groups lower down where the cedars thickened, and hung around the débris of the bake after dinner.

The young men are called into action, aiding the descent from the carriages of recognized friends, escorting the unfamiliar the rounds of the tables, yielding with them to the temptations of fair venders rather than

to the utility of the articles presented, inveigling other youth to the purchase of bouquets at the Floral Temple, and bestowing deserved praise on the cigars, year after year the gift of Cuban summer dwellers.

It was common to hear such young men as had spent too much money go aside and growl a little in concert, voting fairs "humbugs," pretty girls frauds, and the angriest denying the Floral Temple its reputed "beauties," calling them "rustic" and "frights," according as they were plain-spoken men or lofty and contemptuous. One would suppose, on hearing their speeches, that they would never come again, and recall with surprise that they had been here last year and the year before that. Surely some attraction had been powerful; perhaps it was the undoubted *Vuelta Abajos*—perhaps the "frights."

There were careful purchasers who spent warily and made "good bargains" even at a church fair, and who, like their extravagant opposites, put a certain sum in their purses and boasted of falling within rather than exceeding estimates. And there was the dear, delightful, extravagant crowd that bought freely, deliciously, absurdly, justifying every needless purchase with a "never mind, it's for a good cause," and telling the young ladies "to keep the change"; or, if parcels grew too numerous for the burdened hands, giving them

back to "be sold over again," at which the rabble who had stolen their entrance through the dense underbrush opened their mouths, and listened and wished:

"My, how rich they must be!"

There were some, thoughtful but not rich, who, good souls! waited to buy the less salable articles, to the end of making their small expenditures really serviceable, or, knowing the history of some unlovely contribution made by a poor person or in awkward taste, would purchase the homely thing because no one else would; or to make the unfortunate donor happy as well as to relieve the embarrassed venders.

"I wonder if that don't count for praying?" said Cousin Cynthia, hearing Robert describe such an investment.

— And, best and loveliest of all, the dear old General was there. Never, if in reach of Bristol, was the graceful, joyous presence wanting that shone from Edgehill to Washington and scattered blessings all the way between. Some children that he had loved and tossed in infancy, and followed affectionately into womanhood, were "pillars" of the feast, and he was their tower of strength. Accessible to the world at large, no one was ever tempted to trespass, and strangers with the least proper introduction would come from a distance to see the hero in a circle that loved him, only

to be so loved in turn that the single word "Bristol" on any denizen's card was a passport to even busy diplomatic moments. To a Bristol girl belongs the honor of being the only woman kissed in the halls of Congress, one of these protégées of his having surprised him there out of session.

And the stranger who sought him ever retired with charmed memory, and often with material for fireside tales of a gentleman's surroundings when at ease among a people who delighted in him. On one of these "bakes," when success seemed doubtful from dull weather, to gallop away two miles for photographs, and sign them untiringly when the supply at the tables failed, was simply characteristic; and to bring a brother senator or other distinguished guest he made a pleasure enjoyed as well as conferred.

Then the rallying around the tables graced by such guests, and the discussion of the respective merits of the clams and the chowder. To define chowder as the American *bouillabaisse* will be to create understanding between the gourmets of two nations, particularly between the localities Providence and Marseilles and environs. To detail the formula of either dish would be useless to imitators without investing them as well with the "faculty" of one race, the *savoir-faire* of the other.

The protracted dining over at all the tables,

and most of the sales concluded, the liberated maidens, with whom others have kindly changed places, are free to mingle with the crowd in their varied groupings. Some seek the shade of trees, or visit the tents, or find a place of deposit for their "much treasure." The elders look amiably on at the frolics of the children or renew old friendships of by-gone years with distant visitors; and the youth—what can the young people do with themselves but wander in the inviting variety of rocky hill and vale, filled with the most picturesque bits of low wood, and every now and then coming on an opening that down its cedar vista shows the sparkling bay and sunny islands?

The proximity of parent and guardian is so apparent, yet the real facility so great, that the coolest youth would find himself bewildered at times. If ever innocent flirtation found itself facilitated and endorsed, it must be at the church-bake at Fox Hill. Perhaps it contributes as much to success as the *Vuelta Abajos*. Yet it is innocent: to make it otherwise other auspices would have to be sought. Tom and Lizzie may say their sweet nothings in beautiful seclusion as to auditors, but risk nothing, being ever in sight of the other sharers of the wide-spread festival. To be really alone, without risk of interruption, they would have to make themselves *observed* by their absence

and distance. Never has the whisper of scandal connected itself with this festivity.

The closing official exercise is the auction of cold meats and unsold cake, usually a mirth-provoking, and always an interesting, crisis. Then it is that the prudent housekeeper appears to take any possible advantage that may arise; then it may be that some mischief-loving bidder will, in striving to annoy such an economist, find himself the surprised possessor of a cold fowl or a half-ham, or, worse still, a plate of jelly; while some fun-loving girl will suggest a charitable disposition of the same after he has carried it a half-mile into town.

It was while extricating himself from the tangle of this merry auctioneering that Robert, threading his way between people carrying away their food, and narrowly escaping the plunge of one foot into the lemonade-well as it was raised to avoid a fallen jelly-mould, gained the Floral Temple, where he was to assist in the removal of flags.

Here Lizzie Ashford had reigned supreme all day, no beauty who could really rival hers having appeared since the eclipse by Elisa Brenner; and that, like those of other great luminaries, had been but of brief duration.

Toward Robert her manner, which had been a little cool, now resumed its old geniality. But, truth to say, he had been nearly unob servant of either. A letter which, after two or

three days of deliberation, had been sent to his former friend, Miss Fernald, had remained unanswered—it was now ten days—nor had it been returned to him, as, in accordance with instructions on the envelope, if uncalled for it would have been. It must have been received. There had been an undercurrent of disappointment that had marred the pleasures of the whole day. Not even the marked pleasure that shone on the faces of mothers who confided to him the momentary care of their daughters reached him; scarcely did the companionship of the young ladies themselves give him the enjoyment that he was prone to seek; even the unconcealed delight that his generous purchasing bestowed failed to react, as his generosity was wont to do, on his own free nature; and when Emmy Pickering had ruffled the rose-leaf of his fastidious observation he had found himself philosophizing in a rude vein: "What a delusion I am cherishing! She may, after all, have become a most commonplace young lady."

Chatter was at its height in the Floral Temple, good-humor everywhere. Lizzie Ashford had asked Robert to fold flags with her—a signal mark of favor, as those who understand the process will divine—when among the disconnected fragments of talk this came to his ears:

"Pity that the young French lady staying

with Madame Martial is a Catholic and didn't like to come; she would have been so pretty in the Floral Temple!"

"Who is she?"

"Why, you saw her two years ago when she was here—that Miss Fernald."

Robert turned to detect the speaker, but in the changeful crowd removing decorations the voice was lost, and he was called to order by Lizzie's rather petulant "Mr. Elliott, you've knocked down all the flags!"

Robert hastened to repair the mishap, but did not enter into the refolding, with its delicate opportunities, in the mood that Lizzie clearly expected or wished, simply making a business of it, and, with the jarring of her voice as it sounded to his excited ear, a rather prosaic business at that. Finally, in real vexation, she excused herself for a moment and contrived to transfer the work to other hands. Robert saw his error and addressed himself penitently to the work of reinstalling himself in Lizzie's good graces, so well that, in escorting her to her home in Bristol, she was more than persuasive that he should enter; but, heartless fellow that he was, he made pretexts, and walked away from Judge Ashford's door, and, without tea or bath or change of linen, after the dusty drive into town, went straightly and swiftly to Madame Martial's.



V.

THE MEETING OF OLD FRIENDS.

IAD Robert been less eager, had there been an answer to the letter he had written (a rather cautiously written letter, by the way), inviting him, in properly couched terms, to meet his friend during her Bristol visit, his feelings as he stood at this door would have been different. He would have speculated, as he had done for the first four or five days after he had written, as to what manner of woman she had become, and how she would remember and receive him, and he would have been a little thoughtful as to his personnel. Now, as he stood between the stately arbor-vitæs that close-hedged the front steps, he forgot all surmisings, thinking only: "She was away; she did not receive my letter—and—I am going to see her"—without a shadow of misgiving as to what she might have become. A slight delay of the servant in answering the bell annoyed him, while the card to be presented with his inquiry for Miss Fernald was being turned and returned in his impatient hands.

It was not needed, for Euzelle was in the

room to which he was directly ushered. Some noise of a passing carriage had hindered her hearing the bell, and the servant brought Mr. Elliott in without warning. There was no time for embarrassment; they met as if they had parted yesterday.

“Cousin Robert!” was her exclamation, and his involuntary “Little Euzelle!” was a mixture of recognition and surprise.

Then came a moment when each, noting the changes of the past eight years, grew silent, and the fear of having been too forward brought a blush to the maiden’s cheek. Euzelle had grown a tall young lady, and prettier than even the pretty child had been. It was not unquestioned beauty, like her Cousin Elisa’s marvellous face, but there was beauty in it. Its oval outline and clear color, both red and white, and large, pathetic, deep blue eyes, were faultless. Critics would have found the face, though long, a little full and high in the cheek, and the mouth large, though sweet in expression; the nose harmonious. But the charm lay in a certain gravity that was inseparable from the queenliness that, marking the child, characterized every movement of the woman, and of which its wearer was absolutely unconscious. Never was dignity more simple or more entire. And the blush and the smile that lighted her face were like the radiance that follows a summer shower.

All this Robert fathomed speedily, and the thought, "The same child that I knew, but a thousand-fold more charming," sprang into existence in his eager heart when Euzelle, turning to her elderly companion and hostess, presented him. Robert's nature was of that sympathetic, communicative kind that so often invests another with its own glow, and the ladies would readily have felt the influence of his emotion had there been no predisposing cause. But that morning his letter to Euzelle had reached her, having been forwarded to her.

All through the day, in the reminiscences so dear to both ladies, had Euzelle recalled some new detail of the friendship that had been so agreeable to "bonne-mamma" and "dear papa." Madame Martial remembered the Countess' mention of Mr. Elliott after their return to New Rochelle, and her regret at having lost sight of him, which was sufficient to insure his welcome now.

Then came the mutual recitals of the past eight years: the deaths of the Countess of Montmorenci and Dr. Fernald, which had stirred the depths of their feeling. And when Euzelle would at one moment have excused her emotion Robert delicately prevented her, speaking then of his own sole grief of a lifetime in the loss of his mother. It was a dangerous moment for two young souls, such

deep, sweet sympathy. Euzelle controlled herself to say :

“Bonne-mamma was never weary of saying kind things of you from time to time.”

Her illness had been long, and death at her age expected ; but Dr. Fernald's had been sudden, almost without warning—a swift paralysis and supervening apoplexy.

“The very last day that we fairly enjoyed together he named you,” said Euzelle. “We were going out to drive, and as I met him in the office he was putting away a retort, ‘which,’ said he, ‘I last used with that fine fellow Elliott.’ That was our last happy day together.” And it was clear that every memory was sacred, so that to connect Robert with it so pleasantly was like a legacy, and so the young man felt it.

Euzelle, turning suddenly to Madame, asked : “Do you not see that Mr. Elliott's way of speaking French is quite like papa's ?”—which was not a miracle, since both were Americans and had acquired the language ; but it bridged the way from sad topics to lighter ones, and Robert had to explain his presence in Bristol.

“To think that we were in the same town together, and might never have met but for that one day with Elisa Brenner !” said Euzelle. Then came a list of mutual acquaintances, few, indeed, but among them Father Hubert, of Fall River, Euzelle having met him on the

steamship when returning from her one year in France. The worthy Father Hubert had made a visit of friendly intention to his grand-sire when it was clear that no worldly motive could be ascribed.

“Bonne-mamma thought him one of the noblest of men,” said Euzelle, “and he worked like a missionary among the steerage passengers.” And Robert had the side of the story to tell of which she knew nothing, and at eleven o’clock the evening was gone, and they thought the stroke of the mantel chime was going to be but nine. Whether Madame Martial, who had several times nodded a little, had not suspected is doubtful; but no one could have arrested the tide of eager, interested talk that was flowing between them ceaselessly.

And so it was the next evening, and the next, only that with propriety and ease Madame was included in subjects which were most interesting to herself as well. It was charming to her to receive some one who could enjoy her souvenirs without explanation; who could admire her *escritore*, that had been Richelieu’s, without stopping to think who Richelieu had been; who knew her *Sèvres* at a glance, and was not obliged to turn the pieces over to seek date or epoch.

Indeed, Robert had in his own keeping a little porcelain porringer that, in addition to

the usual imperial mark of manufacture, had in scarlet letter also Château de Compiègne, and the decoration was the royal chiffre of Louis Philippe. His mother had given it to him, having been in Havre as a traveller just after the stormy days of '48.

"I suppose," said Robert, "that the little Orleans princes were fed from it often enough, and that the places where the gilt is gone from the edges were worn by their royal baby-mouths."

He could talk history with her almost as agreeably as the Countess had done; and as in former years the two ladies had recounted their old French memories, the one with her vivid Revolutionary reminiscences, the other with the later Napoleonic times after the other lady had left France, so Robert's life abroad under the third Napoleon came in like continued links of a chain.

One evening in particular, becoming interested with the sustained enthusiasm that his listeners shared, he described the return of the army from Italy, and the splendor of the emperor's fête on the 15th of August, 1860.





VI.

ONE FRENCH DAY.

“ **T** was the beginning of my European experience,” said Robert, “ or nearly such. Sailing from New York in July, and reaching Havre in the next month, I came from the still sea and the romance of dreamy old Rouen, that had plunged me into mediæval fancies, to the excited Parisian life of the moment. France was elate with the victories and added territory of the scarcely closed Italian campaign. The army lying just outside the city walls was visited daily by crowds of citizens and strangers, and to the usual stir of the great world was added this new element of vitality.

“ I was staying at the Hôtel de Hollande—Reine Hortense’s hôtel, you know—and for three days could do nothing but wonder at the marvellous scale of everything—the breadth of the streets and the height of the houses. I recalled ours at home as one recalls a toy village; in fact, my first real impression was like that of little Reinhold in the German tale, who, having set up a toy Nu-

remberg village, finds the toys suddenly expanded to mighty houses and true palaces. I caught myself pacing distances and counting stories to houses, as one rubs his eyes and wonders if a dream is finished. And then the miles and miles of it all! After following out thirty-two full omnibus routes I felt as if I had traversed the globe, and this for size and space alone.

"When I think of the quality of the houses and palaces, and magnitude of the public monuments, I said, half-vexed, 'Why has no one ever hinted at this in naming Paris?' Yet should any one to-day ask me to tell them what Paris is like, I should be as dumb as others were to me, from sheer inability to begin. But you know it all."

Madame gesticulated, and he continued:

"When I had been there three days I saw workmen planting rough poles at prominent points all through the city. 'What sudden telegraphing enterprises have these queer French people undertaken?' thought I, but was timid of inquiry, not wishing to advertise myself as an American directly. The next day the telegraph-poles became stately columns. With the whitest of plaster workmen built them up into shafts of Carrara with elaborate capitals upholding statues of gold. Passing to the Place Vendôme, I found it turned into a vast amphitheatre with graded seats to be

covered with crimson velvet. A temporary throne was built there, and now I knew that on the 14th, the day before the emperor's fête, the army was to make its triumphal entry into Paris.

"To you, Madame, to whom French decoration is an alphabet, it would be nothing strange; but the magical-effect upon me of the details that graced the triumph was astounding. Oriflammes in tricolor and of costly material floated from the entire circle of house-tops in the Place Vendôme, the base of each staff of these little tongued flags concealed in shields of green and gold, both shield and banner bearing the imperial cipher. At the junction of the Boulevard des Italiens and the Rue de la Paix, where I dwelt, rose the fine Villafranca statue, about as high as the Washington monument in New York, its base a perfect imitation of Sienna marble; one side adorned with imitative cannon, perfect even to the verdigris; the other three sides graven with the names of the leading battles. The crowning statue, in purest white, was not unlike the figure of Liberty on American coins. The growth of three days appeared like the result of the toil of years.

"In other portions of the city were erected vast pyramidal monuments, similar in form and device, rising from beds of flowers, decorated with the device of the eagle and of

battle-names again. The roofs were a sea of flags waving in graceful unison; in the streets were several American ones.

"On Sunday morning, the 14th, the army, led by the emperor, entered Paris near the site of the old Bastile, and marched to the Place Vendôme, now an open-air throne-room. The movement was always rapid, and at times increased to running; yet, with the swiftest passage of the largest body of men that I have ever seen, it occupied four hours in passing my window. Before the head of the column arrived I had time to see that the houses were crowded with spectators, the lofty roofs, too, occupied where practicable; and as these seven stories of human beings were flower-laden, the picture was to me both exciting and charming.

"The signal of the emperor's approach was a low murmur, which, with his actual presence, burst into enthusiastic applause. Down poured the flowers—not a rain but a tempest of them: the street was carpeted. The emperor rode a chestnut horse of great spirit, which he controlled so well as to add greatly to his dignity and bearing."

Here Madame smiled again.

"I have heard," said she, "that Napoleon Trois always knew that he looked his best in the saddle; he had the limbs so short, and the trunk so long, that he often chose this

pose to display himself and his fine horse-manship as well on occasions."

"But I forgot him directly," continued Robert, "as there came crowding on the rank and file—men footsore and weary in spite of the rest outside the city, wearing the blood-stained clothes of the field; some with bandaged heads and arms in sling, determined to keep their places under the riddled flags. That was before our civil war at home, of course, and I had never seen anything before that gave me such a hint of it. Then the varieties of uniform and qualities of men—hussar, chasseur, and zouave, and the dark African Turcos, the study of Paris, the centre of a group wherever one showed himself.

"It stirred me to see occasional embraces as one of the long line on guard at the pavement's edge, keeping back the crowd on the walks, recognized some friend, and, filled with emotion that could not be controlled, gave way and broke from his post for a hurried, instantaneous embrace.

"What splendid horses were those of the cavalry!"

The women by gestures begged him to continue a picture that he was rendering vivid by manner quite as forcibly as by language.

"Sometimes the enthusiasm deepened to emotion that was nearly silent; then the crowd found speech again as some favorite general or

corps came on, and, through nervous sympathy, I could hardly restrain my own voice from joining in such cries as 'Chasseur! chasseur!' 'Canrobert! Canrobert!' 'MacMahon! MacMahon!' swept the air in double accents with that long, low cry that is so impressive in the French vivas.

"Austrian trophy cannon and flags, as well as the shredded tri-colors, which spoke in their scantiness of what the conflict had been, were borne; and presently numbers of the wounded came on. These spoke to the tender-hearted women, and to those of us who were weak as women at that moment.

"At the Place Vendôme there was some brief programme arranged, but I was too exhausted in body and soul, at the end of the four hours, to bear more, though I was sorry when I heard of the little Prince Imperial being brought out, for I had not seen the baby Napoleon then. I believe that the emperor took him up on the saddle before him.

"The next day we abandoned to the people, who thronged in crowds to celebrate the emperor's fête; but at nightfall the impulse to join them was irresistible. If the decorations had been striking by day, the night was simply magical. The gas-jets of the street were now blazing wreaths of laurel surrounding the 'N' cipher; the draperies and colorings were as clear in the flood from every building as

by daylight. Most superb were those at the Hôtel de Ville—finer than at any other single point in the city. A distant view of the Panthéon revealed its cupola in circles of flame, while the whole path of the Seine was marked in every variety of light. It was fine to look down upon its parti-colored lanterns and to follow to where Notre Dame's old towers were bright, then all along to the Institute.

"I drifted on by the Louvre to the Tuilleries, where the crowd was immense and admitted at intervals only. In one of these, in a sort of human whirlpool, I was swept in to a scene of wonder that I should not venture to describe to one unacquainted with the resources of Paris in illumination. One walked in paths of living light. Every approach to the palace front, and to no inconsiderable depth, was hedged in by lattices of lights a few inches apart, so as to give the impression of continuous flame. These lattices or diamonds extended from the ground far above the head—arbors of gems. The other paths were less dazzling and bewildering in effect, but not less beautiful in design, the lights of tiny glass cups hanging in festoons, both single and double, and of varied colors.

"It was nearly nine o'clock when I stood directly before the central balcony of the palace, listening to the people's call for the royal presence in that long, low cry or wail, 'Vive

l'Empereur!' so utterly unlike anything to which any English-speaking tongue gives utterance. No one could have kept cool at the enthusiasm that greeted the appearance of Napoleon III. and Eugénie. They accorded a few moments of graceful presence, then the empress gently waved her hand in the direction of a brilliant outburst of fireworks. 'The grand bouquet' was just commencing, and before I had half satisfied my curious sight the fickle crowd had turned their backs upon her. Guess how it vexed and set me moralizing! The royal twain retired. I continued my reflections along the Rue de Rivoli, whose arcades and suspended lights make such wonderful night-perspectives at any time, and were now fabulously brilliant with brightness that dwindled to stars, and then to luminous pin-points miles away.

"Some other American passing in the crowd broke out in the vein of prophecy to which our race is nearly as addicted, in moments of excitement, as to boasting.

"'Napoleon III. is a great man,' said he, 'and has fixed his throne and crown at last.'

"His companion venturing a doubtful expression based on the caprice of Parisian politics and nature, the first speaker emphasized his statement. 'He is as fixed,' he added, 'as yonder star.'

"The American had probably dined, for the

supposed star was the nucleus of the last bright rocket, which rose, burst, and fell in a silver shower. Then, through a grand maze of flaming golden crowns and laurel wreaths, perfect to the minutest leaf, I returned to the Place Vendôme, where two solitary, twinkling stars kept watch from the top of the column, peeped at the myriad fancy lanterns of the Boulevard des Italiens, and, with the impression of having all my boy-dreams of the *Arabian Nights* vivified, went back to my hotel."

Robert was a true raconteur. No matter on what theme he dwelt, or howsoever lightly he touched it, his own enthusiasm entered into it and insensibly stirred his listener to sympathy; and the tones of his voice were of great range and varied with every shade of feeling.

The elder lady, familiar from infancy with French life and history, and scarcely removed from being an actor therein, listened with interest to the later page turned by younger hands, and was reminded, at every phase of description, of old experiences, albeit in the trifles of decoration too trivial for historian to chronicle. To the young girl taught by tradition, and even livelier in her own imagination than either of her past venerable instructors, Robert's descriptions were no less entertaining, and were aided by her own year in France, which had been full of delightful experience too.

But underlying the whole in her case was another element. In her orphanage, which was almost isolation as to family, here was a link in the chain of memory and association with all that had been dearest on earth to her. Here was one that bonne-mamma had known and approved, almost loved. As a child she had not scrupled to love him dearly, and as he sat talking in his animated way, in the tones that she had thought "so like papa's," their mellow cadence and varied intonations stole into her heart with strange power; and when Madame's eyes more than once filled in tribute, her own heart beat quick responses. The youth had come so pleasantly into both their lives. It was half-past eleven when their perceptions noted the hour this night. Robert took hasty but graceful leave, and the two women went up to their bed-chambers with mingled words of satisfaction and praise.

At the top of the stair Madame stopped, as if transfixed by a shock, and, turning squarely around to her younger follower, threw a gleam of light from her candle down the stair aslant the piece of old Gobelin that tapestried the walls, and, with a tone of sudden recollection and surprise, said:

"Mais, mon enfant, we have forgotten John Woodville!"

Now, John Woodville was Euzelle Fernald's fiancé.



VII.

BETROTHALS, FRENCH AND AMERICAN.

JHE Countess of Montmorenci, in view of her age and declining health, had occupied herself with no little solicitude during her last months in negotiating a marriage for her granddaughter in true French fashion. After much painstaking and a degree of inquiry that the importance of the measure warranted, the venerable woman had at length chosen and presented for Euzelle's approval young John Woodville.

The elder woman's reasons were twofold. First, the young man's family and standing were unexceptionable. His father was a prominent and successful lawyer of New York, and the fortune of his mother would have been almost a competency for their three children had there been no other source of revenue. To the Countess' delight, although for two generations American, Mrs. Woodville was found to be a descendant of the great St. Pols, whose military and courtly rank has shone in France since the days of Francis I.

Second, Madame, as we more readily name

her, had a more careful regard for the personal happiness of her grandchild than many a parent who makes selection, and she believed, with a fine knowledge of human nature but ignorance of the sentimental affections, that she was fully consulting Euzelle in the few conversations that they held together on the subject. John Woodville was the personification of good-humor, and, without being a weak character altogether, was fond of pleasing. To his mother and sisters he seemed a prince of men, from the extent of his yielding to their every wish and scheme, which frequently involves less than would at first appear among people of wealth whose tastes are in unison.

John Woodville's weak point was a want of inventive energy that was practically as great an evil as laziness. He could work in his father's office, and did so in a fairly commendable way, because the groove was made and he was set in it ; but without friends, money, or influence John Woodville would have sunk nearly to the position of a day-laborer. Madame saw all this clearly enough ; but the fact that his position in life was well assured, apart from the handsome "dot" that Euzelle would bring him, and which he knew well enough how to take care of, removed all scruples, and she especially reflected on the way in which he would yield to any positive wishes on the part of a wife.

In fact, nothing could illustrate this better than the way in which he had received his father's overtures on the subject after the matter had been wholly arranged between the heads of the families. He was thoughtful for a moment, and then expressed himself:

"Well, if you like it so. I'd rather it had been little Rose Wallace—but—I suppose this will please mamma and the girls better."

"Decidedly, my son," replied his father, an Englishman, and as fully in accord with Madame's manner of arranging affairs as if he had never breathed American air—"decidedly, the union of interests in this case is not only the most advantageous, but the girl herself is truly charming and eminently the choice of your mother, as she will be of your sisters, to whom we have not yet spoken."

"It could hardly be expected before I was advised myself," said John, who, though so carefully trained to English obedience, here and there showed a trace of his Yankee mothering. Then, with a sigh, "Poor little Rose! Well, it's no use thinking of her any more, if this is all cut and dried, as it seems to be." And he lit a cigar, and puffed away with vigor as he went out of the office.

"A lad of sense," said the senior Woodville, "and has the making of a discreet man in him." Here ended the first lesson.

On the same day the second was being ad-

ministered to Euzelle in the chamber to which bonne-mamma was now steadily confined, the final interviews with Woodville père having of necessity taken place there.

"At last, mon enfant, behold the negotiations concluded. Thou art the betrothed of young M'sieur Woodville, who learns this to-day—nay, doubtless knows it at this hour. Thou wilt wed a charming and sensible young man, whose care to please a wife will not be less than the pains thou hast seen him bestow on his devoted mother and sisters."

"They seem very fond of him," said Euzelle thoughtfully.

"And thou, mignonne, hast already told me that he is as pleasing to thee as any young man of our circle. Thou wilt meet at dinner to-night as betrothed."

Then the good lady went on to gravely discourse of the duties to which Euzelle as a good wife ought specially to devote herself, of the honor and reverence in which she ought to hold her husband; but, with the superior knowledge that life had given her, she could not resist salting this counsel, and thrusting in as a half-aside a weapon not to be despised at need:

"A little finesse, Euzelle, a little guidance on thine own part, and thou wilt always accomplish thine own wishes with this young man. But this is not to appear, entend-s-tu."

Leave him always to suppose thee obedient—thou wilt be, indeed; it is thy duty." And the old lady looked so honest in saying this; then continued: "Of course; but—thou understandest—by a little management, removing troublesome things from his path, never directly opposing his wishes, thou canst reach by the circuit whither the straight path will not lead." Nor did the good woman dream that her prudential advice did not walk hand-in-hand with the highest morality.

It was all Greek to Euzelle, whose nature was scarcely changed from that of her childhood, though she had been in society six months and seen "the best" of New York under the chaperonage of Mrs. Woodville and other ladies, in bonne-mamma's inability to go out.

And of the nature of love Euzelle knew no more than of the measles and several contagious diseases that she had not yet encountered. She had vague ideas that it was something to follow marriage and was in some way inseparably connected with it.

She had accepted John Woodville; there had been a single chaste kiss exchanged in bonne-mamma's presence, and these two well-bred young people had never met alone, except once by chance, when neither of them thought of renewing the familiarity. They had become friendly, with the friendliness

of young people of the same sex. A month of this kind of thing ensued, and John went to England to visit relatives, with the possibility of an added stay in Paris, as a preliminary "outing" before settling down to matrimony and business.

"A man should see a little of the world before taking up his rôle in it," said the senior Woodville. "My father sent me out to Vienna with my uncle at the embassy, you remember, as soon as I was engaged to you, Mathilda," said he, addressing his wife.

"Yes," she replied, and added innocently: "and pa and I thought it such a queer time to choose—to go away from a girl just as you became engaged to her."

"But you see the advantage—we had the opportunity of seeing others before we finally decided and married; it gave us really a larger choice."

"And suppose one of us had chosen and the other hadn't?" said she, half-ignorant of the truth she was telling.

"Well, better to have found it out before than after," replied her husband. "I was twice as sure that I wished to marry you when I had reviewed a score or two of pretty Austrian and French girls."

"'Twasn't very nice for me to stay at home and think about the reviewing; and I wish that our John had waited a little longer and

become better acquainted with Euzelle; for he never seemed as really fond of her as you did of me—I mean, not in the same way. He has never seemed to care to find little chances apart to speak with her; and how we used to watch the vigilant eyes of your mother, while mine often actually went out of the room and left us together!"

"But that was very indiscreet, I am sure, as I have often thought since."

"I can't see why, even now," said this thoroughly American woman in spite of the St. Pol ancestry and inherited proprieties; "and whenever Euzelle is here I shall try to favor the young couple myself—though," she added in a lower voice, "I don't believe they'll care much about it."

As the two women whom we left on the stairway stood, the one, lamp in hand, throwing its light aslant the tapestry, the other in shadow now, but looking up at her elder as if perplexed, the stillness of the night was for a moment unbroken. Had Madame said, "You have forgotten John Woodville," Euzelle might have suspected an implied reproach. As it was, coupling themselves in the suggestion, "We have forgotten John Woodville," there was skill on the part of the speaker.

"So we have," said Euzelle, still perplexed,

without knowing why. "I suppose we had so many things to recall and tell, and in some way he did not seem to belong to it."

"I think that Mr. Elliott ought to know," said Madame suggestively.

"Oh! yes," said Euzelle acquiescently. "Why not? We'll tell him to-morrow."

"The child!" said Madame, in her mental speech. "But if he is not careful this Elliott will make a woman of her; he would have done as much for me at her age." And the pair embraced with "good-nights" and went to their rooms.

It was in taking up her beads that Euzelle detected a singular emotion, and wholly disagreeable, as the picture of telling Mr. Elliott of her engagement crossed her thoughts again. She was at first quite unable to analyze it, but by degrees her habits of self-examination came to her aid.

"Is it possible?" she asked. "Could loving be like *that*? But no; it comes with marriage, or after, bonne-mamma has always said." And then, with a mighty effort, Euzelle turned her thoughts to John Woodville, and strove to invest him with the feeling that had sprung up unbidden and free in her heart toward Robert Elliott. But she could not; as soon fix butterfly-wings prematurely to the crawling caterpillar as picture easy John in the place of that handsome enthusiast.

"He does not know nearly as much as Cousin Robert," thought Euzelle; "and then, as his own mother says, 'John never could tell what he did know.' But"—she checked herself—"isn't this dishonorable, to be comparing my chosen husband with any other man whatever? May God forgive me!" And she now gave her full attention to her prayers.

As she rose from her knees her eye rested on a little work-box that she had that day taken from her trunk—the same, treasured through all the years since, that Robert had given her on her tenth birthday.

"I see," she said, relieved: "I have always loved Cousin Robert; some other kind of loving must belong to marriage, and I have not sinned." And the poor, relieved conscience brought the sleep of youth and peace.





VIII.

FINESSE, AND AN AWAKENING.

AS Robert made his way rapidly to his boarding-place his mind was occupied with some perplexing reflections. It was no part of any plan of his that his enjoyment of Euzelle had been so selfish ; he had rather drifted into it.

Since the days of the "church bake" he had been unusually occupied in sending away portions of two sets of machinery, on which he was at work, to their destinations in German laboratories, and in the evening he had yielded, without thought, to the first impulse and hurried away to Madame Martial's. Without deliberation he had enjoyed these evenings only too well.

But this was utter selfishness toward Euzelle, and he would hasten to repair it. But how ? The girls who knew her and had named her at the "bake," though of the prominent "set," were not the most influential members of it, and if Euzelle were to be accepted and fêted and caressed, in sail, and bake, and drive, and croquet-party, it must be under the auspices of

stronger powers than these. If once frowned on or neglected by the Ashford or Pickering fraternity she would be a comparative outsider; and though she might enjoy a society of its kind, it would be nothing in comparison to the secured attentions of the young élite of Bristol, with their force of summer visitors, in an unending round of seasonable gayeties.

Certainly he ought to secure this to her. But he reflected again that he had doubtless offended the chief divinity of the feminine Olympus. Lizzie Ashford would not forgive so readily this time, and he had actually forgotten that he had been invited to the Pickering's this very evening to meet the two returning Chesters, who had come for another week of Bristol.

Late as was the hour, Mrs. Russell was not only wakeful but still sitting up for the young man, who had made himself a favorite with her also, and of her he took counsel. He had not been able to make a secret of Euzelle after his first visit to her.

"Cousin Cynthia," said he, "what shall I do?"

"You are playing a rather difficult game," said she, "and must take a partner. Lizzie Ashford is the ace in the Bristol pack, but she is alone—she's just Judge Ashford's pretty daughter. But Emmy Pickering, with her brothers and cousins, are all the rest of the

court cards together, and if you are cool you can hold them all."

It was in accordance, then, with her advice that Robert, contrary to any usual custom of his own, gave himself to a couple of morning calls on the following day, which was flattering to the young ladies that he wished to conciliate. With Emmy Pickering there was little difficulty. She accepted his excuses; remembered the Chesters and Eliza Brenner sometimes talking together of the French cousin. She was glad of an acquisition to the round of festivities that she was preparing for June and Noel's enjoyment; above all, she was not in love with Robert, and saw no rival in the new-comer. She promised to call in person that afternoon and invite Euzelle to a sail and picnic on Prudence Island planned for the morrow, should wind and weather favor.

With Lizzie the enterprise was more difficult. The slighted goddess was not so easily approached as Emmy had been; and when the despatching of German freight had been fully urged for the days, there were the evenings unaccounted for, and, the true reason forthcoming, Lizzie was not disposed to yield without a struggle.

"You must have been very fond of your little friend," she said, "to renew her friendship so ardently." And she threw a pierc-

ing glance of inquiry which was not quite disarmed by the apparent frankness of Robert's answer.

"She was indeed a charming little creature, and a great pet of mine; now she is altogether a young lady." And his voice defied scrutiny.

Lizzie gathered such comfort as she could, and Robert, now perceiving his advantage, announced carelessly the Pickering invitation for the morrow quite as a matter of course. So Emmy Pickering was pledged to take her up! Poor Lizzie had nothing now but to hoist her own banner and make "alliance, offensive and defensive," after the manner of nations, or announce herself inimical directly.

"Of course, Mr. Elliott," said Lizzie, with as much grace as she could now assume, but determined to draw advantage to herself as well—"of course I shall be charmed to render Miss Fernald's visit as agreeable as possible; and since Emmy is going over there this afternoon, suppose you call for me and introduce me to her this evening."

Robert, who had promised himself one more delightful evening of seclusion before the world rushed in, could only acquiesce in concealed disappointment, which speedily became vexation as he reflected on the appearance that the visit would take in the eyes of Euzelle and Madame, as if Lizzie were the

special friend that he had singled out of all Bristol for introduction. What might they not infer from it, and how cleverly Lizzie would work from that basis!

"Mehercule!" said Robert, once more at home. "That woman will marry me yet in spite of myself."

Cousin Cynthia heard only the expletive. "That's the first time I ever heard him swear," said she, and at dinner, seeing him in better humor, asked what the word meant. The clouds returned for a moment. "A pagan might call it praying," said he; then, remembering that she could not have known its import, continued: "And I was praying—for deliverance."

Mrs. Russell knew what he meant as clearly as if it had been written in a book before her. "I think Miss Fernald is just in time," said she; at which Robert's eyes dilated, and he wondered what sixth sense had been given to women, as he had wondered the night before in her plan for his relief from perplexity, and again that morning at Lizzie's own counter-stroke, and the gain that she contrived to win by it. In accordance with Cousin Cynthia's counsel he had tried to make Lizzie an ally in a battle which she had suspected was against herself, but in agreeing to treaty she had out-generalled him and forced him to announce their interests as identical.

It was quite eight o'clock before Robert had stirred in preparation for the promised call, and quite half-past before he stood with Lizzie Ashford at Madame Martial's door. He had bitten his lips with annoyance in the gathering dusk, for the evening was cloudy. He had hoped that the ladies would be out, and that on the morrow he might introduce Lizzie in an ordinary way, and insure her protection of Euzelle in an easier way. He had forgotten the contingency of cards that would have to be left. But the ladies were in, and, delay as he would, they reached the house at twenty minutes to nine. Robert would have made it later still to abbreviate the call; but, finding Lizzie most acquiescent in prolonging the walk, suddenly he quickened their pace and arrived at the moment stated.

Twenty minutes were quite enough for the purposes of all. After the introductions Lizzie so fully occupied herself in the study of Euzelle as to be oblivious of a conversation taking place between Madame and Robert, who thus fell to each other. This was exactly what the good lady desired, and she was prompt to avail herself of the cover of the other conversation to lead to the topic which she felt had been culpably omitted heretofore.

“In our enjoyment of memories,” said she

at a suitable moment, "we have hardly done justice to the anticipations of the future; our dear friend's prospects are indeed too bright to have been crowded out of mention." And seeing Robert unsuspecting, she stated plainly the case as it stood between Euzelle and John Woodville.

Robert's face gave no sign, but Madame's quick eye saw his fingers close on the tassel of the sofa-pillow beside him. With delicacy she stooped to adjust the corner of a rug that she had contrived to kick away, and in that moment Robert had so far recovered himself as to make the natural inquiries about the young man's situation in life, and learn, as briefly stated in American parlance, "what was to become of Euzelle." Madame prolonged her description mercifully until she saw color returning to the suddenly paled face of the man before her, and then gave him opportunity for speech. He made a sudden, sharp inquiry that took her unaware.

"And Euzelle—Miss Fernald," he corrected himself—"she is without doubt deeply attached to Monsieur Woodville?"

Madame, expecting a totally different question and taken off her guard, made an involuntary shoulder-shrug and began:

"As for that, Monsieur Elliott knows the custom of our French betrothals and espousals: the marriage of inclination cedes to that

of convenience. But truly," she said, once more self-possessed, "the young pair are really attached; it could not be otherwise, so young and so admirably suited to each other as they are."

Etiquette now demanded a change of partners, and Robert addressed himself in congratulation to Euzelle, while Madame renounced her French, to take up her accented English in Lizzie's behalf. Lizzie longed to know what Robert was saying in that foreign tongue to the girl whose charm she was compelled to acknowledge in spite of her first criticism, "wanting in style." A few moments, however, taught Lizzie her error, and she felt a "style" that she could not fathom. After the congratulation, what Robert was saying was:

"Tell me what Mr. Woodville is like."

This was asked so easily and kindly, Robert being now in self-command, that Euzelle's answer was as artless and self-betraying as possible.

Quoting bonne-mamma, she gave a description of Mr. Woodville's good qualities, which veil was as transparent as day.

"And how long have you known him yourself?" asked Robert, clearly sifting the chaff from the grain.

"As for that," said Euzelle, reflecting, "let me see. The year before I went to Europe

we met the Woodvilles, first at Long Branch, where Nelly Woodville and I secretly discussed whether it would do to let our dolls be seen with us on the beach or no—we were such large girls for fifteen years—and John was there then; but so were the Wallaces, and he was all for Rose, so that we never played together.

“Do you know,” she continued laughingly, “I told him on the day of our betrothal that it ought to have been Rose instead of myself.” Then she went on as before: “And after that, why, I did not see him often—he was at college, and we went to France; and we used to meet at parties in the six months I was ‘out’ before bonne-mamma’s death. We have only been really acquainted about a month—the month before he went to England.”

“And what did Mr. Woodville say when you told him it ought to have been Rose?” queried Robert in an assumed indifferent tone.

“He only said, ‘Well, it isn’t Rose,’ and we went on with our game of backgammon.” Euzelle’s tone in imitative quotation told Robert more than it said to her as originally spoken.

The clock struck nine and Lizzie gave the signal to withdraw. Yes, the twenty minutes had been enough for all—for Euzelle to study the belle of Bristol, and wonder why Robert had brought her; for Madame to add to this

speculation the conviction that she had acquitted her conscience of a duty that had been even more disagreeable than she had anticipated; for Lizzie to feel a danger that she could not estimate or dismiss; and for Robert, whose emotions cannot be condensed into a word.

They went out, and Madame turned to the hapless tassel of her sofa-pillow; it was a mass of crushed wood and floss. "Pauvre jeune homme!" said she. "It was quite time to have spoken."

"I find her charming, your friend," said Lizzie Ashford wisely, when they were fairly on the street; and then she sang a little pæan whose every note wrought desolation in Robert's heart. How would such praise have sounded in his ears an hour ago, and with what a sickening sense did he now listen to the catalogue of qualities he was forbidden more to enjoy! For the lightning glare is not quicker or clearer than was the light of discovery that Madame's words had flashed upon his soul.

"I wonder if it will rain to-morrow?" said Lizzie, looking upward at the really dark sky, and fervently wishing it, but not more so than her companion, who would have invoked the traditional "cat-and-dog" deluge to have spared himself the ordeal of the morrow, and then, as he reflected, of all the morrows

to which he was now committed. He had launched Euzelle on the sea of society, and he must now see that she should sail securely and well. But "Hang John Woodville! Why had he not stayed at home to take care of her?"

The thoughts of each were too preoccupied to notice the straying condition of the other, and Lizzie for once was less urgent that Robert should enter and spend the later evening.

"I must be very careful now, or I shall lose him," said she.

Robert, free, quickened, by degrees, his pace southward, almost to running. Down the main or Hope Street; then where the waters of little Walker's Cove cut the Love Rocks, turning for a minute or two to eastward past the foot of High, the parallel to Hope; on to where the land resumes its southward course in a sweep that carries the river toward the great outer bay, again the prominent object, and scarcely impeded by little Walker's Island, a plaything of cedars and sand, that a moment ago was the main attraction of the picture; then, losing all water-views in the foliage lying between bay and wood, on farm lands and summer homes, he stopped panting at the foot of the long Ferry Hill that rose up before him.

Until now there had been little thought; it was a rush of conflicting emotions fierce and

fine, a sense of something shutting down upon him, too, of being baffled he knew not how, confronted he knew not with what; and it was not until spent with physical exertion that the body allowed the mind to resume its power.

As he more slowly ascended the long hill he saw it all: it was love, true love. "I might have known all these years," he said, "what stood between me and the love of other women. Child that she was, she was more than all the rest to me, for her promise was the exquisite bud of a truly beautiful flower."

Then followed a singular feeling of self-pity that he scorned directly as babyish and to be repudiated. "Hard that a man's love should bloom after so many years, to be chilled at once." And as this vanished before a deeper indignation he said in words:

"Barbarous that a woman should be so sacrificed! The child has not been touched by the shadow of love yet."

Then he thought himself wrong in judging a woman of Madame's mode of thought and training, and he recalled with what emotion Euzelle had said: "Bonne-mamma said that it made her quite contented to die, seeing that I was so well arranged for." And this was clearly the girl's own strongest feeling on the whole matter.

He reached the summit of the hill. By a sudden steep descent, unlike the gradual climb,

the road before him lost itself a little below him in low trees, but over their tops he could see the deep flow of the Ferry Way that separated him from the island of Rhode Island, while on either hand spread out two noble bays—old Narragansett and her islands to right, and Mount Hope Bay and its Indian height to left. This point of view is one that, in the sunny days of usual summer visits, breaks upon the observer with startling effect—so many miles of varied scenery following the slow hill-climb in which little but side meadows are visible. To the northeast Mount Hope invites admiring glances; but Robert turned from it to-night as if in resentment at the very name, and suffered his eye to rest in preference on the long lines of mills and houses that mark Fall River, and here and there a light like a fiery eye gleamed out under the low banks of sullen clouds that were heaviest in that direction. And something suited his mood in the rush of the tides from the two great bays surging against each other and chafing the land at his feet.

He must have stayed an hour on that wild hill-top, when, gathering himself up with a manner unlike his own, he said: "Well, she at least is spared—thank God it is I instead! And at last I am a man, for I have loved and I have suffered."



IX.

A SAIL, AND A PANIC, AND VALOR.

HE next day it neither rained cats and dogs nor rained at all, but, what was as bad for excursions, the wind hauled to southward and blew a double-reefer, which prohibited sailing to young ladies in cambric and muslin. Robert called to announce the unfavorable news to Euzelle, and excused himself on plea of a summons by telegraph to Warren, a near town. The young girl saw nothing unusual in his manner, but her friend observed that he had not slept, for he shivered as people of certain temperaments always do, chilliness during the day following wakefulness at night.

As Robert was crossing the entrance-hall, having made his adieu, his eye fell on the little work-box left by chance on a table there. He could not resist a closer inspection to satisfy recognition, and Madame, who was not initiated as to its origin, could not understand the fling with which he now threw himself toward the door.

“Dear child!” said he, “she has kept it all

these years; then she never could have quite forgotten me." And there was a miserable comfort in the thought.

The next day was unfavorable still, but the following, a Saturday, opened with all possible loveliness and was full of promise. A clear sky and a light but steady breeze from the northwest favored almost any plan of departure from the port, with the probability of the regular southwester that blows nineteen out of twenty summer afternoons, and helps homeward from most points visited inside the ocean-line.

There was no reason for postponing the picnic, and at an early hour due notice was circulated among those invited. The party had grown a little in waiting, as parties are wont to do, and, becoming too large for the boat originally chartered, a difficulty had arisen on this point. It had ended in the loan of a fine sloop-rigged craft, the *Kelpie*, to Robert alone—the owner being very specific on this point and as to his assuming all responsibilities personally, which made him in a manner joint host, and wholly so as to the sailing. He had, therefore, felt at liberty to invite Mrs. Russell, knowing, too, her popularity among the young folks, who were to be chiefly consulted on this occasion. The warm welcome accorded her could leave no doubt on this point.

"I had no time to consult you about bringing Cousin Cynthia," said he briefly aside to the Pickerings.

"And you knew too well how rarely we are honored in this way," was the response, as genuine as polite, while mixed voices were saying: "O Cousin Cynthia!" and "We're so glad!" and "How nice!" Even Will Lennox and Ned Barnes, who alone had hesitated, exchanging glances together, were now by general sentiment brought forward, one saying, "What a pleasure, Mrs. Russell!" the other, "We are honored indeed!" But the tones of both were false, and Cousin Cynthia smiled "in her little interior," as the French express it.

Lizzie Ashford was late and brought a friend from Boston, a Mr. Knowles; and this with other delays made it quite ten o'clock before the departure. Robert was observed to be studying the sky and water attentively during the last delay, and a word or two with Noel Chester hinted at his fear of a morning calm, which in late summer will often occur between the dying-out of the light northerly breezes and the springing-up of the steady south ocean wind. The others were too ignorant or careless to make observation beyond the joyous present moment.

A steamboat had gone out at nine, and another arriving from Providence at this hour

made a succession of waves, on which the sailboat rose and fell gracefully. This is a movement to which none can be indifferent, and was the starting-point of delight to those familiar, and to the few who found in it a novelty the surprise became pleasure as the experiment proved safe. Groups of children on the steamboat waved handkerchiefs to the sailing party, and their salutes were returned.

In the clear, sweet air a child's voice came down wishing "A pleasant voyage"; then another, "A good time to you!" and a third in very Canadian accent called "Bon voyage!" looking to see them wholly mystified; but the surprise was on her own part, as, the two boats being very close, Euzelle looked up and responded to the "Québécois" in decent French.

The wind was growing lighter; two coasters and a coal-laden schooner were having a slow time coming in, and from one of them a sailor's idle song was clearly heard. But the breeze held long enough to set them beyond Poppasquash Point before it failed. Near the end of the land, on the inner or harbor side, a huge flat stone balances itself on a rock, in form not unlike a mighty quoit.

"They say that the devil was pitching from Mount Hope over yonder at the Point, and just missed, the quoit remaining as you see it," said Ned Barnes.

"People are not always so willing to point out a failure on the part of that skilful individual," replied June Chester.

"No," said Cousin Cynthia, completing the thought; "they'd rather see faults in good people—'spots on the sun.'"

Their plan had been to sail around Prudence Island, going down to east of it, crossing between it and Conanicut where one lies in line behind the other, up the west side of Prudence, skimming Patience, Hope, and Despair Islands, then by East Greenwich Bay to Rocky Point in time for the three-o'clock shore dinner, making a noon lunch on board or at any tempting point that might offer at that hour.

The wind failed wholly as they cleared the Point; but the tide served awhile and bore them within sound of the splash among the sedges of Chesauannoc, where the water, bending and bathing the long, rush-like grasses, broke gently on the shore. The sparkle on the bright green sedge was intensified by its movement and drew forth expressions of admiration. Another steamboat Newport-bound, coming down the outer bay and gay with excursion-flags, bent its course toward the other side of Prudence, and the music from its band was sufficiently distant to mingle delicately with the still sound of the waves on shore without spoiling it.

It was well that something diverted the attention, for the sun was now so well up that its rays were almost as severe as at noon, and the more than ruddy faces of the party proclaimed suffering silently borne. The reflection from the water, a novelty and a torment to some of the girls, was fairly blistering the faces of such as could not find room in the shadow of the useless sail or cabin, parasols being no protection from this attack from below. They watched the lazy jelly-fish sunning themselves in the cool depths below, and tried to find their transparency pleasing.

"These are the moments that put your good-humor to the test," said Robert in a tone of sympathy, "and we should not blame you if you felt very cross indeed."

At this moment a small, unlovely craft drew near, painted with cheap green, and showing a sail greatly patched. It was a heavy, high-sided affair, and a man rowing it in the calm seemed obliged to use all his strength. A figure, apparently a woman, was leaning or lying forward motionless. The man stopped rowing an instant and made a signal pointing to the woman.

"Trouble there," said Joey Pickering. "I know that boat; it belongs to some of the poor people over at the fish-works on Prudence. Some of them are often coming or going in it for supplies."

“The woman does not stir,” said Noel, “and her position is strange; perhaps she has fainted.”

“Small wonder in this blaze,” said Lizzie Ashford.

By this time the boat was near enough to reveal something lying on the bottom under a coarse sheet, and it was over this that the woman was bending.

“Pat ahoy!” called Ned Barnes, standing up and saluting an unmistakable Irishman with an attempted facetiousness. “Shure and what'll it be this time, me foine man?”

“It'll be a funeral once we reach Bristol,” replied the man soberly, and lifted a corner of the sheet. But the woman, who had not stirred from her attitude of heavy grief, swept it from him with a swift movement, saying:

“And it's not a sight for the eyes of careless folk.” And as she spoke she raised her own eyes, red with weeping, and cast one look around, as if seeking without expecting sympathy.

The man, addressing Robert at the helm, asked permission to shelter himself and his sorrowful freight in the shadow of the great sail, and, if it were not too troublesome, for some water. “It's two hours or more that we're out from Prudence,” said he; “we left at eight o'clock.”

“More nearly three,” said Robert, looking

at his watch and passing the tiller to Noel, "since it wants but a quarter to eleven."

Meantime a scene was taking place on the *Kelpie* that divided his attention. A frequent observer of human nature in masses once said that nothing was easier than to lead a crowd in any moment of excited feeling, it depending only on the first speaker or actor to direct the emotion of a number of persons, who almost ceased to be capable of individual action at such times. The first speaker after the poor Irishman's response had been Will Lennox.

"I trust that it's nothing contagious," said he. "When did the child die, and of what complaint?" he inquired of the woman, the man being engaged with Robert.

"The puir thing sickened o' Wednesday, and we couldn't get a doctor till yesterday because o' Thursday's blow and we on the island; and he said it was too late, and called it diptiery, and the child died yesterday afternoon."

"Diphtheria!" said Will in real dismay—no one else had spoken. "This ought not to be allowed. Mr. Elliott!"

But Robert was in the cabin consulting with Emmy Pickering as to what had best be spared from their luncheon-basket, never doubting the unprovision of these heavy-hearted, empty-handed people, who had yet

their funeral arrangements to make far from home and among strangers.

But Will's alarm had spread among the sun-scorched, sensitive girls, and one of them lay back faint on Mrs. Russell's lap, while all the others who could shrank from that side of the boat to the farther one, all except Euzelle Fernald. As the poor man had partly lifted the covering from the dead, Euzelle had seen a pair of childish hands clasping a crucifix, and the appealing look of the mother's hungry eyes had fully met her own.

She knew that she, the only Catholic there, could speak as no other could. In the confusion occasioned by fear and by the fainting of her companion she had the chance, quite unobserved, as she felt, and, kneeling on the seat, leaned over the gunwale, bringing her face close to that of the unhappy mother.

What passed in the first few moments only God and the angels know. The poor woman was sobbing and pouring out her grief in sentences that told of pent-up pain. In a few moments, Mrs. Russell's charge being restored, and Cousin Cynthia herself having by a few calm words brought the girls out of the real panic into which they had been thrown, she came over to where Euzelle and the poor mother were talking and crying together. She caught some broken words about "Niver telling the little fellow ony

more o' them stories," and Euzelle's own sweet voice saying "that she had often thought that the Blessed Virgin in heaven must love to tell stories to the dear little dead children who had gone there, about the child Jesus when He was a little one, and so they must ever be learning of all those years of His beautiful life that we know nothing about, and be growing like Him."

Cousin Cynthia touched Euzelle gently, her own eyes filling as she listened.

"There is probably little or no danger out on this broad, sweet water," said she, "but it is needless to give the timid pain. The south wind has struck below and will help them directly, and Mr. Elliott and Emmy have made up a nice lunch for them, and what farther assistance they need can be best given on shore!" And she gently drew Euzelle away.

She must have arranged it all in a moment's talk with Robert that no one had noticed; but as the boat was brought alongside, as if to receive the lunch, Cousin Cynthia too stepped in and made a sign to the man to pull off. Mingled expressions of protest and surprise were heard:

"It's too bad!" "She ought not to do it!" "It's just like her," said Emmy Pickering; and "I think she's right" came from June Chester.

"The man, who is employed at the fish-works, has no friends, scarcely any acquaintances, in Bristol," Robert hastened to explain. "He must find priest, undertaker, and go three miles to Warren to reach the nearest Catholic cemetery after getting certificates, and return to-night to three other children on the island. Mrs. Russell could not leave such a case as that to take care of itself, as you may well suppose. But here comes the wind. Mind sheet, Joe! Heads, girls!" as the boom stirred, and in another minute the Irishman's heavy green boat, already some distance away, was speeding before the wind, while the *Kelpie*, close-hauled, was laying a course along Prudence, the cool wind refreshing the heated, frightened girls and restoring courage and lightness of heart. In a few moments they were abeam of Sandy Point, a low, projecting "sand-spit," and its lighthouse diverted thought.

"What a life one must lead in a lighthouse!" said Ned Barnes.

"People think it's lonesome and easy," said Mr. Knowles, the gentleman who had come with Lizzie Ashford; "but the labor that is required to keep the lamps and glasses in order, and to register and report passing vessels, usually surprises those who look into it."

"I knew a woman who lived here last

year," said Lizzie. "She came to papa about some law matters connected with the light-keeping. The government furnishes all the towels and chamois-skins for polishing the glasses, as well as oil; and between the last keeper's going and her coming there were some deficits.

"But I did not mean to speak of that. She saved a coal-schooner last fall by her voice. It was one foggy morning. The light was burning, but they could not see it on board; they heard the horn, but had missed their bearings, and thought they were off Conanicut—down there," said Lizzie, pointing.

"She could hear their voices at last, they came in so near; so she waded out on the point there, and called out so clearly that they heard and hailed her, and asked where they were, and when they heard 'Sandy Point Light' they were just in time to go about. She said that she expected to hear the keel grate as they did so."

"I hope that they were grateful," said Mr. Knowles.

"Oh! yes," said Lizzie. "The vessel was small and owned by a good many men not very well off, but they united and bought her a sewing-machine, and she asked me questions about using it while she was waiting to see papa."

As the ins and outs of coast shut away for

the moment the strong ocean breeze, sweet land-smells were blown out to them from heated fields of bay and huckleberry, the side of the island here being almost moor-like in low growth, and without fences or trees. In the shadow the color was a sombre brown, and whenever the voices hushed a wonderful silence prevailed, no sign of life appearing on land, the few farms being widely scattered and distant from this point.

It was a relief to look across to opposite islands where the sun lay on field and sand and sedge, turning all to gold and green. Yet there are moods in which one would willingly seek the graver landscape. Robert, whose occupation at the helm excused him as far as he pleased from general conversation, thought of days to come, when in his own small boat he should like to drift here alone, and watch the majestic march of just such mighty cloud-shadows as at intervals crossed the blue and wrote in hieroglyph on the upland and valley of the island; and he made mental note of it as a refuge and consolation for future days.

They ran on past the opening between the islands far enough to see an old mansion on Prudence—one of those massive brick cubes that the architects of to-day delight to develop with modern grace into structures wholly unrecognizable, and which represent

"the family," as the young man of 1885 represents his grandsire of the century gone by—"Autre temps, autre mœurs."

Then they shot the passage between Prudence and Conanicut, and ran up to northward again, with enough westing in their course to catch an idealized glimpse of little Wickford, and later East Greenwich, lying like a set jewel in the circling bay, that opens in late afternoon lights like the "tender blue" of mountain distance. How pretty these towns appear with their scattered houses and abundant trees, when seen a few miles out on the bay!

"Nothing but the high land is wanting to make this equal to more famous scenery," said Noel Chester. "Let these low hills swell to mountains and we should rival the Mediterranean in our variety of scenery." This has been so often repeated among Rhode Islanders and affirmed by enchanted strangers as to have become an article of State faith.

They had met a head-tide so strong in rounding Prudence that not only must the plan of "reading" (as this close coasting is called) Patience, Hope, and Despair Islands be abandoned, but Rocky Point must be given up till another day, and also the plan of seeking a convenient landing and making a dinner ashore instead of lunch. It could not be done in less than another hour, and there

was no question of readiness on the part of all.

Rounding the north end of Prudence, which stretches out a slender arm, and retreating well into its hollow, a most tempting spot was visible between miles of sand-sweeps on both sides. It was where low, weather-stained buildings of a farm were nearly hidden by trees that grew in double row, forming a shady lane down to the very water's edge. A small wharf within walking distance of it enabled the party to land, while the carrying of baskets of provision over the sand was avoided by Joey Pickering's placing them all in a light tender, a mere egg-shell of a craft, and taking it so near the shore opening of the lane that it could be drawn up by some one wading out with a boat-hook carried around by one of the shore party.

This was the moment when every one's mood became apparent. The stimulus of the swift movement of the boat was withdrawn, the contagion of chatter in a crowded group was at an end, and the party moved over the sand irregularly, but eager to reach the promised shadows of the cool and tempting lane.

Emmy Pickering, finding herself by accident beside Lizzie Ashford, told her of Euzelle Fernald's engagement. A deeper color than the sunburn tinted all Lizzie's face, and

to a keener observer than Emmy her "Are you sure?" would have been betrayal.

"Madame told me so this morning while we were waiting," said Emmy in a tone of injury at implied doubt.

"Tell me her very words," said Lizzie.

"It is a pity to throw such temptation uselessly before our Bristol youth," quoted Emmy. And then she explained that Miss Fernald was engaged to a young gentleman now abroad.

On board the boat Lizzie's conduct had been a little forced. As if to sustain the rôle attempted in the evening call, she assumed as much familiarity with Robert as propriety would permit; and the part would have been a little overdone had not his own preoccupation caused a failure in response. To Euzelle, quickened to keen observation by the experience of her own unsolved feelings, there was something in it that jarred, and she could not understand her pain.

"Do you remember the day that we lost ourselves in the woods near Mount Hope?" Lizzie had asked, at a moment when the question could be heard only by those nearest Robert, of whom Euzelle was one; and by and by there was another "Do you remember?" and then an allusion to "a sketch of the Love Rocks given by him"; to none of which could Robert reply otherwise than gra-

ciously, since no opportunity was afforded in which he could explain that in neither excursion nor gift was there aught of anything that Lizzie's tone and manner suggested.

Had he been called to strictest account he could then honestly have said that he had enjoyed Lizzie's society, as he had enjoyed that of other girls, rather more from the appeal that her prettiness made to his artistic perceptions, but as unmixed with thoughts of love as was his enjoyment of all the others.

Euzelle was too untrained to fathom this. She read exactly as Lizzie wished, and did not know what made her desire to be alone. She had, like Robert, looked over to the shadowy fields, and wished that she could sit still and think among the bay and berries.

She was walking on beside the stranger, Mr. Knowles, and was a little unprepared for the outburst of cordiality on Lizzie's part that now greeted her and maintained itself to the day's end. It was genuine. Lizzie was bubbling over with relief and joy, and, feeling the innate dislike that she had been cherishing toward Euzelle vanish, she now made her, in the fashion of a most spoiled child, the object of her attentions.

It would have required a better scholar in the world's ways and in human nature to have fathomed the meaning of the change,

and Euzelle, blaming herself for her own pained feeling toward Lizzie, opened her sore heart as far as she possibly could in response.

"She is Cousin Robert's friend, perhaps his fiancée," she thought; "and so very kind to me." And then she looked at her pretty face, and thought that "she must be a dear, nice girl in every way."

If the effort was a struggle it was because, all unknown to her or to Lizzie, the antagonism that the latter had felt had heretofore marked every line of feature and coursed through every tone of voice in every sentence spoken. And now that the ice was broken, the pent-up stream growing warm from its thawed-out sources, Euzelle strove to find the waters sweet as well as sunny; and when Lizzie laid her hand gently, almost affectionately, upon her own, she took it responsively and swallowed down something that choked her, with a swift inward prayer for forgiveness, and an angel looked down and smiled on her white soul.

"See, Miss Fernald," said Noel, as they reached the shade, "what a snug retreat this is. Here we lie in Potter's Cove, completely shut in by these dunes or sand-hills, with only one little opening yonder to hint at world or water beyond."

"It is as strange a spot as I ever saw," she

answered; "and this bit here is full of loneliness now, but it must be desolate in winter."

"You should see the sand-storms in autumn," said Joey—"huge masses lifted by the wind, looking from Bristol like spots of dense fog even on clear, windy days, and one is glad to meet them no nearer."

Dinner was taken in most informal fashion, where tree and rock intermingled most favorably, and as near shore as possible, no other pretence at seat or table being made; and while the abundance of food was being disposed of a fire of driftwood and dried boughs had reduced itself to coals, and Joey and Emmy made coffee. They walked the shady lane and through two or three other avenues of trees similarly planted—for the island belongs to wealthy people in Providence, who have for many years rewarded tree-culture in reduction of rent therefor, and there was sufficient shelter on the eastern slopes to admit of fine growth.

There was a tendency in the party to break up into groups, and the occasion was less merry than the clam-bake had been. A mood of gravity would have settled down on them at one moment, as, sitting quite still after the dinner, the wind among the few trees and the waves on shore made a plaintive kind of music.

But Lizzie Ashford's spirits ! She laughed and she sang at intervals, and ran from one to another, more attentive to every one's wants than even the Pickerings and Chesters themselves, with a droll speech to one and something kindly to another, adapting herself to every mood, and most watchful of all to see that Euzelle was being entertained. In short, she was, as Will Lennox remarked, "the life of the party."

There were two of the company who felt less life than usual, and it was well for Robert and Euzelle that Lizzie's surplus vitality especially addressed itself to cover their deficiency.

The wind had freshened palpably as the afternoon wore on, and at four o'clock the homeward movement was made. Then it was that Robert's first temptation and real resistance came. In the long day there had occurred no opportunity for conversation with Euzelle; but now it happened naturally, and as the party arranged themselves for the twenty minutes' walk to the wharf they found themselves together by merest chance: there had been no seeking on either side. Lizzie saw it, and that it was the first time, too, and good-naturedly left them to themselves.

Robert was poising the question delicately, "Have I not a right to so much as this?" and answering alternately "Yes" and "No,"

and "It might be enjoyed innocently by any one else, but would it be by me—now?" And then a burst of feeling possessed him, and surprised him as well, making him tremble from head to foot; for he had never known it in its fulness before. It was in looking at her as she picked up a stone from the shore; the trivial action seemed full of grace, and she lovelier than any created woman. And at the same moment the nature of his emotion was such that the conviction forced itself upon him that were the light to fade from her beautiful eyes and the tongue be stilled through infirmity, were she deaf, dumb, blind, she would be the one to whom he would cleave for ever, could those eyes look lovingly into his own once, and those lips tell the truth a single time for which his soul was so hungry.

"That God may not abandon me to dis-honor!" was his silent but real prayer. "Such thoughts profane her worthiness." And Noel coming up to ask who would take the tender and empty provision-baskets out to the yacht, Robert renounced the walk and volunteered. Once in the boat he indulged a backward glance to the retreating Noel and Euzelle, now hastening to join the others. They were not talking, and he saw her turn once and look toward him.

"God stay John Woodville if it is like this

with him!" he cried half-aloud, as another wave of feeling surged over him. "And if it isn't—what profanation!" And the tightly-clenched oar and spin 'of the light boat through the water attracted the attention of some already on board.

"I shouldn't wonder if it was going to overflow, boys," said Will Lennox. "Old man Elliott's getting aboard with a rush."

Little as the wind was troubling Robert's thoughts then, he was occupied with little else ten minutes later; for, emerging from the Cove under full sail, first the jib was taken in, and then it was found necessary to reef, and that speedily, the breeze having become a blow, and half a gale at that. As the *Kelpie* lay-to, such of the girls as were timid commented on the skill with which the reefing was done, especially the manly fashion in which Will Lennox, quite at his ease on any boat, occupied the post of danger—if danger there were—and, standing outside of the other men, was tying reef-points.

The *Kelpie*, built for a fast boat, carried an unusually long boom, which projected so far beyond her stern that, even hauled in as it was for reefing, Lennox, to make a certain "turn" at the outer end, had to step out on the bight of the close-hauled sheet. To see him working in this position, his hair blown about and his clothing drenched, the boat leaping in a strong

sea-way, was something to impress a girl's view of the case, and June Chester said:

"Is it not wonderful how he can do it!" And some other voice added: "Holding on to nothing but the knots he ties!"

"Noel is a good yachtsman," said June, "and has told me how hard it is to stand there and do just that thing."

"Yes, Lennox is doing it handsomely," said Elliott; "he is very fearless about a boat."

It was necessary to bring out water-proofs for the protection of the party to windward; as many of them crowded up there as the prevailing fashion of hoop-skirts would permit, and the finest steering could not avert occasional drenchings. Curls that were coaxed straightened, faces sunburned in the morning stung with the salt spray as it dried; but all took it good-humoredly, and those who were used to it merrily, as a part of the experience to be expected. And the harbor of Bristol was rapidly nearing.

"How we shall recall to-day wherever we may be a year hence!" said Lizzie Ashford, in the common fashion of girlish speech. They naturally fell to speculating where they should be, and Mr. Knowles, who was a little didactic, made remarks on the wisely-veiled future. Then a silence, and probably all asked unconsciously, as Robert Elliott did literally in his heart:

"What will my lot and portion be?"

And at that instant Miss Euzelle Fernald, in the act of removing the now needless water-proof, stumbled on the anchor, caught by her skirt, and fell toward the tiller. Robert caught her in both outstretched arms, or she would have reached the floor. But for this the question would have passed out of his mind and been forgotten for ever.

That evening it was but natural that the party should have found themselves together on Mrs. Russell's piazza, a frequent rendezvous with many of them, and now visited to learn the particulars of her errand of mercy with the bereaved Irish pair.

While the man had sought the priest she had secured and assisted the undertaker, and sent proper authorities to the mother, still keeping her lone watch in the boat in the heated noonday. And after the burial she had taken the pair to her own house for a few moments' rest. But the greatest assistance was rendered when the high wind reached a point that made the green boat's return to windward an impossibility, as the island of Prudence lay; then the mother's lamentations for the dead mingled with anxieties for the living children from whom she was separated. Then it was that Cousin Cynthia took them to a personal friend, and pleaded their cause so successfully that one of the best boats in

the harbor was sent out with them in a time when its owner would hardly have ventured otherwise, and a promise was made that the clumsy "tub" should be towed over on some favorable day.

Cousin Cynthia omitted the blessings that fell to her own share in transmitting secretly to Euzelle those bestowed on her. "The poor woman said that she would pray for you while she lived."

"I need her prayers, and shall be grateful for them," said Euzelle, in a tone that struck Mrs. Russell forcibly. She had been too used to poor people's gratitude to think of it as anything special, and was too Protestant to attach any tangible practical value to the benison.

"People have often said that they would pray for me," she said, "but I never thought of its doing any good, of its making any real difference." And then it was Euzelle's turn to be surprised—she who had been taught from infancy to seek this treasure. Cousin Cynthia spoke of this to Robert in the late evening when the guests had gone, and he smiled and said: "I remember well enough one day when I was sitting with her grandmother, and she ran in flushed and pleased, saying: 'O bonne-mamma! I've had the blessings of the poor—the blessings of the poor, bonne-mamma!' after making some charity or other"

"And I've taken it all for politeness!" said Cousin Cynthia. "There are a good many Catholic kinks like that in the training of children that I like!"

A discussion waxed warm among the girls on the question of courage, which had arisen from the display of apparently opposing qualities—Will Lennox's timidity about the disease, and his manly boldness in the reefing. Needless to say he was absent.

"We thought that he was brave enough," said one of the girls, "to make us forget about his conduct in the morning."

"I do not see that fear can be made a cause of blame," said Robert, "although my mother used to say that 'people found out, as they grew older, that fears could be diminished in themselves by control, and that we could often save ourselves pain in that way, as well as govern our actions, which was all that she held a person responsible for.'"

"I suppose," said June Chester, "we are bound to act right, if we feel wrong."

"People can't help being afraid of contagious sickness, can they?" asked Emmy Pickering.

"It is desirable that they should be afraid," said Mrs. Russell quietly. "I am myself."

"You! you!" cried several voices together. "Why, no one goes oftener among all kinds of sickness than you, Cousin Cynthia."

"I did not say that people ought to desert and neglect the sick, but that it is desirable that there should be a universal fear of contagion. That fear is salutary and keeps disease from spreading. Useless people should never expose themselves, and those who have occasion to do so should suppress their fears and do their duty in spite of them."

"You are like that valiant commander who was accused of fear through looking pale. You remember his answer, Cousin Cynthia," said Noel: "'If you were afraid as I you would run away.'"

"I confess to having felt so sometimes at the outset," said she, "but once engaged the sick-room is like any other battle-field—fear is forgotten in interest or excitement."

"Do you remember that Greek, Chester," asked Robert, "who trembled in his body at the thought of the trials that his valiant soul was going to surmount, and that in full anticipation of victory? Such pictures are wise to contemplate," added he after a pause, thinking on moral strife.

Then the talk became personal, again returning to Will Lennox, and to another gentleman so little known to Mrs. Russell that she ventured an unusual freedom of speech in her wish to give these girls sound ideas.

"I do not know the man of whom you were speaking last," she said, "but you named him

'brave.' 'Brave, very likely; but has he courage clear through—courage to pay his debts and face his washerwoman, or does he cut down a cross-street to avoid a dun at the end of another?"

"I think that's mixing things up, Cousin Cynthia," said June, almost fretfully.

"That's just the way that people are," replied the elder lady—"all mixed up; and the danger is that young folks don't know how to sort 'em. You all think that if a man's free in giving he's generous in all things, and that if he 'seems good,' as you girls say, he is good and reliable in everything.'"

"Well, what would you have us do, Cousin Cynthia—you who are always teaching us to believe good of everybody, and are more afraid of imputing motives than any one that I know?"

"True, child, it is my effort. But I would have you exercise common prudence in common things. You girls are not very often tempted to impute bad motives to such young men as you call 'stylish'—the well-gloved, cane-carrying fraternity—but the danger is of your judging less attractive people who do not admire you, and of bestowing your enthusiasm on very unworthy objects."

"Well, I do not believe that a man who would do what Will Lennox did to-day would do a mean thing, Cousin Cynthia," said one of

her girl auditors. "Why, it seemed to me that he was risking his life, doing that hardest of the reefing, and the boat fairly pounding in the furious wind and sea."

"I do not want to talk to you about Will Lennox," said Cousin Cynthia; "and few of his qualities can be of much account to you, since he is going to marry another girl. But to illustrate my meaning I will tell you about a 'brave' youth that I knew before you were born. His name was Joel Steward. Joel was handsome, and he knew it, and liked to dress up to those good looks of his. But his purse wasn't equal to the steady draft, and Joel was often in debt; and by and by it seemed as if he had grown used to it and didn't feel very badly about it.

"It was when he was feeling very puzzled as to his resources that a young lady from Albany, an heiress, came to Bristol, and a pleasant acquaintance sprang up between them. This young girl, Phœbe Beals, was visiting a friend who lived next to Joel's aunt, and they met almost daily. The fame of her fortune preceding her, this really attractive girl did not want for beaux, as we called them then, and a lively fortnight had passed away without other incident than a rather marked preference on Phœbe's part for Joel Steward's attentions. His manner was agreeable to her; he spoke in full, round

tones, with something like authority, though he guarded himself against overbearing.

"In the clam-bakes and on board a boat he seemed naturally to be a leader, and other young men seemed as instinctively to follow. To see him hold and master a struggling horse was really fine, he could do it with so much less apparent exertion than other men. And on the boats he was always doing the risky things as handy and spry as a regular sailor.

"He was a good swimmer, and one day, when a little dog got knocked off by a jibing boom, Joel was overboard, too, in a minute. 'Just for a dog!' said a girl looking on. Well, 'twas small and didn't seem very likely to catch the boat, and belonged to one of the girls; and almost everybody that knew Joel thought that he did it, too, to show off before Phœbe Beals, with whom things looked like coming to a crisis.

"She looked very pale, but didn't cry out, as one of the others did, but she watched him as if her eyes would come out of her head; and when, after a little more swimming around than he really needed to have done, he came dripping on board, she was heard to say to herself, 'What a brave man!'

"Well, Joel's path was flowery after that, for a couple of weeks at any rate. His attentions were now so steady and acceptable that

the other young men gave way, and it seemed to be understood that Joel and Phœbe would pair off on all suitable occasions.

“The last Sunday of Phœbe’s visit had now come, and Joel, in a fine new suit which replaced the sea-soaked costume, was escorting Phœbe to church. He had fully resolved to risk his fate now, which seemed to hang on a decision that he, with every looker-on, agreed must be a favorable one.

“‘We are early,’ said Joe; ‘let us prolong the walk.’

“‘Very well,’ said Phœbe; ‘we will go down by the water and see how the bay looks this morning’—she, too, feeling no apparent reluctance to a longer walk to church. Joel had, it is said by a person looking down from an open window, cleared his throat and said, ‘Miss Phœbe, before you bid our seaside town farewell there is a matter’—when a little girl, clearly a child of the poor, ran out from one of the Thames Street houses.

“‘Please, please, Mr. Steward,’ said she, ‘do pay mamma some of that money; we are so hungry to-day, and mamma cried last night ‘cause you couldn’t pay her when she came.’

“‘I—I,’ stammered Joel, feeling in one pocket, then in another—‘I’ve left my pocket-book in the other suit.’

“‘O Mr. Steward!’ said Phœbe, with the

sweetest smile, 'do not let that embarrass you. How much do you want, little girl?' she asked, drawing her own pretty purse from her pocket. 'How glad I am that I have formed the habit of always keeping something on hand!'

"'What a charming habit!' thought Joel. 'How I should like to fall into it!' But he was brought to something beyond meditation by the child's shrill response:

"'Well, it amounts ter seven-sixty-two now, ma says, an' she's throw'd in ever so many collars and hankchivs.'

"The money was placed in full in the child's hand, Joel striving to stammer an apology.

"'Don't name it, Mr. Steward,' said Phœbe, smiling. 'You can return it to-morrow, if you feel the obligation so deeply,' she added gaily. Joel bit his lip, and in resuming conversation did not take it up where he left off, if we can judge by the sequel.

"The sermon ended, Joel and Phœbe returned with appointments for the evening service at St. Michael's. Just as the bells were ringing for this, and Joel came down the steps carrying Miss Phœbe's prayer-book, a tiny little man bowed and called him aside. Phœbe stepped aside, too; but the conversation, though brief, was forcible, and she could not avoid the impression of the discussion of some bill or other, as Joel's face flushed in

joining her, and hardly gave a clue as to what topic of her own introduction would be desirable.

“‘A matter of business,’ he explained to excuse the delay, and Phœbe, answering in kindly sympathy, remarked: ‘How annoying and how rude! Is not the week long enough for business?’

“As the congregation poured out of church later, an ill-conditioned boy of ten, darting in and out of confusing groups, finally attached himself to Joel and Phœbe, who were directing their course toward the south end of town. Something had been said vaguely of the Love Rocks, and here and now Joel had resolved to speak.

“While they were in full hearing of a number of people walking in the same direction, the unkempt urchin, evidently bursting with his mission, thrust into Phœbe’s hand a dirty scrawl, which she nearly dropped in disgust from her delicate glove, looking for explanation in the boy’s face.

“‘They do say, miss, that you be paying all Mr. Joel’s debts to-day, and we be’s feared to be left out, it’s stood so long.’

“‘And pray what does Mr. Steward owe you for?’ said Phœbe, now really awaking to suspicion.

“‘It’s the last washerwoman afore Widder Jones took him up; and we can’t live in his

old suller no longer to eat up the debt, pa's rheumatiz is so bad."

"What farther revelation would have been made will never be known. The family were the poorest of poor, and, like every one else that Joel owed, had been roused to action by the swiftly-spread report quoted by the boy, and growing out of the morning's action exaggerated.

"Joel, fairly beside himself, gave the boy a stinging blow with his cane without reference to the spot, and the weapon, coming down heavily upon the lad's face, brought a stream of blood from the nose.

"'I see that Mr. Steward can be cruel as well as brave,' said Phœbe, not as perfectly mistress of herself as she would have liked to be, and applying her fine handkerchief at need.

"To make a long story short, girls, Phœbe went home and inquired into it, and found that Joel, while possessing many attractive and really desirable qualities, was at heart deficient.

"'I think,' said she to me many years after, "that Joel never meant to be deliberately dishonest, but when I found out the poverty of those he owed, and that it must have been brought before him over and over again, I said: "That's a brave man, but a coward; for nothing but a coward at heart could have fled before such misery as he allowed to pile up before his debts."

"The little tailor," added Cousin Cynthia, "had placed so large a venture in those last new clothes that he was fairly scared, and had gone down to see if Joel and Phœbe were really going to church together, and so might assume the marriage to be a settled thing, which was about what folks thought they had a right to assume in those days."

"What became of Joel?" asked one of Mrs. Russell's listeners.

"Though Joel lost the heiress," she replied, "he married very well, but he was always a little hard on his wife, keeping her close in all that was spent, though the money came with her; and though he was a dashing fellow to the end of his life, and often called brave by strangers, and many a young person admired a showy kind of courage displayed, one poor woman who loved him hid her disappointment, though he has been known to draw a pair of kid gloves so smartly across her bared arm that a welt of skin rose up in response.

"So I grew up to mixed ideas of bravery, like everything else," said Cousin Cynthia.

The girls were silent and thoughtful, and directly went home. It was not without design that Cousin Cynthia had told her story. She meant to spoil a mistaken admiration on the part of one of her audience for just such another as Joel Steward, and that other was Will Lennox.



X.

OVER INDIAN GROUND.

WO carriages departing from Madame Martial's door, and rolling out of the town to eastward and through Mount Lane, soon began the climb toward Mount Hope. It was a party of Lizzie Ashford's planning for the entertainment of Mr. Knowles, whose Indian lore had led him to Bristol for the specific purpose of studying Indian history on Indian ground. He purposed spending some time in the town for this object, and to-day was to be a preliminary introduction to Mount Hope, which Lizzie meant to make a party of pleasure as well. She had asked Robert to drive a carryall of her father's, with Mr. Knowles beside him, and invited Euzelle to share the back-seat with herself. The Pick-erings, brother and sister, and Cousin Cynthia were occupants of the other vehicle, with a young physician of Bristol, Dr. Leeds, who, having a patient to visit at the Mount farm and his own carriage being under repair availed himself of the opportunity.

“I should think,” said Mr. Knowles, “that

this ground would be as dear to the Rhode Island student as Greece and Italy to the classic scholar; yet I do not recall a single allusion to Indian history or habits in any visit I have made to the State, except by my own introduction of the theme."

"I do not think that there is much interest felt," said Lizzie frankly. "We never studied anything about it at school that made any impression, and no one here ever talks about the Indians except Squire Pickering. I remember, when Emmy and I were children, that he used to take us on his knees and tell us stories, but I've forgotten them now, except something about Massasoit and some chickens."

Then after a moment she added: "I believe that I've forgotten that, too. What was it? He would not have some chickens killed once, would he?"

"Not even to aid his recovery after a sickness that was nigh unto death," answered Knowles. "He was so low that sight had failed, when Mr. Winslow, from the Plymouth colony, arrived, and was recognized by him. He spoke, you may remember, saying: 'Matta neen wonckanet namen Winsnow' (O Winslow! I shall never see thee again)."

"I remember now," said Lizzie, "that Massasoit called him Winsnow, unable to pronounce the *l*."

"Well," continued Mr. Knowles, "he made

broth for the poor savage, whose royalty was wofully underfed that winter; and as he rallied, to the astonishment of all, Mr. Winslow sent off an Indian at two o'clock at night through the woods to Plymouth for materials for more broth. The runner bringing back two chickens alive, Massasoit was so pleased with these novelties that he would not eat them, even in his sore straits, but kept them as pets."

"Was not Massasoit an exceptional character among the red-skins?" asked Robert.

"Yes; he was neither bloody nor cruel, say the historians, and utterly wanting in the traditional vindictive spirit, really forgiving at heart, and ruling his people without severity and with great justice."

"Hobbemak's lament for him always seemed very touching to me," said Euzelle modestly.

"What was it, and who was Hobbemak?" asked Lizzie.

"Hobbemak was Massasoit's dear friend, and when he heard of his chieftain's death mourned deeply. 'My loving sachem! my loving sachem!' said he, 'many have I known, but never any like thee!' And then he spoke to Mr. Winslow in almost the very words in which Mr. Knowles has just described his character."

At the foot of the slope of the actual Mount Hope both parties, leaving the carriages, began to climb afoot.

"There are few pages in Indian history,"

renewed Mr. Knowles, "that rivet the interest like the days and times of King Philip, and few characters that fascinate the imagination like Philip's own; and here we are on Philip's land and home."

The summit of the little mound, scarcely two hundred feet above the shores of Mount Hope Bay, was quickly reached, and, after a few moments of delighted survey of the two great bays, with the near towns of Bristol and Warren, and city of Fall River, the eye naturally sought the more remote Providence, and the beautiful panorama of bay and island, farm, forest, and village lying between. White sails dotted in everywhere, and the picture was no less beautiful than peaceful in the summer sunlight.

But Mr. Knowles, stirred to deep feeling, saw a contrasting past, and, quoting an eminent historian, said with pathetic voice:

"Neither the Pyramids of Egypt nor the Coliseum of the Eternal City are draped with a more sublime antiquity than this spot. Here, during generations that no man can number, the sons of the forest gathered around their council-fires, and struggled, as human hearts, whether savage or civilized, must ever struggle, against life's stormy doom. Here, long centuries ago, were the joys of the bridal and the anguish that gathers around the freshly-opened grave. Beneath the moon which then as now silvered this mound 'the Indian lover wooed his dusky maid,' upon the beach barbaric childhood revelled, and their red limbs were bathed in the crystal waves."

"I can almost see little Indian boys down

there in the water below, you make it so real," said Emmy Pickering, the first to break silence. "But none of these Indian stories seem very real to me, except the fights, and the tomahawking, and the horrid parts, and those I don't like to think of."

"That is the part that naturally occurs to you, because you recall history in place of fiction," said Robert. "But there must have been tragedies of life and death on a grand scale among the Indians before the white man's advent, and were I ever to write a novel its love-making should be drawn from the wild, free wood-life of untrammelled natures like theirs. It would be devoid of all that dwarfs us in the diplomatic social contracts of to-day," said he, with unaccountable bitterness, thinking of the marriage of convenience talked over with Madame Martial.

"Philip and Wootonekanuske, Alexander and Weetamoo," responded Euzelle in illustration, unsuspecting of his feeling.

"Yes," said Mr. Knowles, catching the name of the savage princess, "people talk of woman's rights and property-holding as a thing of to-day; but think of the position of that magnificent woman, who not only ruled her hundreds of warriors in her own right, but could bring them to battle as well in person, after her wrath had been stirred by the death of her husband, Alexander."

"What a creature she was all through!" said Euzelle, utterly self-forgetful now in the spirit Mr. Knowles had stirred—"from the dance which she led at the council-fire in her jewels and wampum, to the heroic death that she courted rather than surrender when every other soul yielded except hers."

"I remember," said Mr. Knowles, "she seized upon a piece of wood and dashed into the river—as it proved, to her death. And the chronicle says: 'Her body, like a bronze statue of marvellous symmetry, was soon after found washed upon the shore.' It could not have been far from this spot," and he pointed a few miles up-stream, "toward the Swanzy swamps and thickets, where her companions were taken."

"Weetamoo and Philip and Massasoit soften one's antipathies to all savage nature," said Joey Pickering. "Yet I suppose that they were exceptional in character, and what tales of bloodshed attach to some of them!"

"Assuredly," said Robert, "we do not err in valuing Indian nature at its exact worth; but we ought to reflect that we have the whole picture from the pens of their enemies, and often before wrath was cooled. Think how, in our scarcely ended war, both Northern and Southern descriptions of invading armies and prison stories depict men who pretend to both civilization and Christianity; and carry back,

if you please, the passions and causes of the barbarities of to-day, and plant them in the untaught, irreligious savage breast! For my own part I find a singular parallel of description between both pages of history. The lower natures of the rank and file wore trophy 'charms' at their watch-chains, made of soldiers' bones; and Weetamoo's rare beauty of face and form, which beside her rank ought to have spared her insult after death, did not prevent her head being exposed in Taunton, where her subjects, there captives, seeing it, 'filled the air with their shrieks and lamentations.' We know what the savages did, but these others were Christians."

Then, thinking of Weetamoo still, he added :

"Though a savage and a warrior, she was capable of inspiring a deep affection"; and with feeling he said: "She was dearly, dearly loved."

"And that is enough for one woman's life," said Lizzie, whom Robert's tones were carrying far enough from Weetamoo; but she spoke too low, she thought, for any one to hear, and no one did except Euzelle.

They went down to drink at Philip's Spring, which brought their thoughts back to him.

"The first thing that made me care about Philip," said Euzelle, "was a terrible thing, too, and I never know whether I am right or wrong in the feeling that I experience. It

was when he pursued the Indian who spoke ill of his father, Massasoit. Of course, according to the Indian code, he was justified, even compelled to avenge the insult, as 'any one speaking ill of the dead was to forfeit life at the hand of the nearest relative.' Of course Alexander or Philip must do something, but I have often wondered if in keeping it up so long, hunting the offender day after day, something better did not steal in before he reached Nantucket. Because he was in other respects so very just—yes, more, magnanimous."

"I can relieve you, perhaps," said Mr. Knowles, coming to the rescue. "Do you not remember what actually did happen? Assassamooyh escaped, although Philip had him once almost under the very hatchet, and allowed his purchase and ransom in the end. I have always myself believed, in view of his character as a man, that he was softened, and after he had shown himself capable of and willing to avenge his dead father by the exertion displayed, he was equally willing to spare his victim."

"How much more these little accounts of character interest us to-day," said Cousin Cynthia, "than the war records! I wish that all history could be written as far as possible on such a plan, so that instead of so many battle-pages we might get at the men and their times in other ways. Civilized tomahawking is as revolting as savage."

Then, turning to Euzelle, she pleaded for "something more, for I have learned more of the Wampanoag Indians and their part of Rhode Island history than I ever knew before." But Euzelle blushed as soon as she found that she had attracted attention to herself, and it was left to Mr. Knowles to portray Philip, the diplomatist, the Machiavelli of the tribes, and the tireless, consummate general of his forces, with many illustrative instances; with little touches here and there from Robert as some point of honor or domestic brightness was recalled.

It was evident that Mr. Knowles' enthusiasm was for the intellect of the chieftain, the skill of the commander, while Robert's admiration had been called forth by the nature of the man, in his fatherly feeling for his people, and conduct of life in its more peaceful channels; and he talked long of his courtesy toward captives, instancing the celebrated Mrs. Rowlandson, whom every one else, in the fashion of the day, made an object of derision or abuse.

"Yes," said Euzelle, again forgetting herself, "Philip would not even let her make him a garment without paying her 'like a gentleman,' as Abbott says; and he stood aloof from the carousals that celebrated the final exchange of prisoners, and in his own time and admirable way told her that he had 'a

pleasant word' for her, which was her release on the morrow. If I ever longed to hear a story told on the favorable side it has been poor Pometacom's, which was his real name."

"Where did you find all this out, and the rest that you seem to know so much about?" said Lizzie. "For there isn't the first thing that you've been talking about that I ever knew anything of before. My only idea of King Philip was the old 'big Injun' carved statue over the engine-house door on High Street."

"I do not know much, really," said Euzelle; "but after my first visit to Bristol I could not help reading whatever I could find about it, and a librarian kindly told me what books to get. That's all."

Cousin Cynthia smiled, and, unwilling to spoil a simple heart, lowered her voice in remarking to Mr. Knowles, "When people read 'whatever they can find out about' things it makes them intelligent, on the whole, I think." And a bright smile came back from Robert, listening too, and thanked her.

Lizzie felt uncomfortable again. It was not the first time that day that Euzelle's intelligence and quickness had set her in marked contrast with her own vapid nothings of small-talk and petty mannerisms, captivating, perhaps, to certain youth, but lost on men like Robert and Mr. Knowles.

In her morning chatter she had spoken of a lime-schooner's burning just outside the Point. "The lime took fire," said she volubly, "and the schooner, through a burnt hole, took in water."

"I should say that the lime took water, and the schooner took fire," said Euzelle in a droll but inoffensive tone that set Mr. Knowles and Robert laughing; while the latter, appealed to in his own hobby by this intelligent bit of chemistry, had been less careful of his praise than Cousin Cynthia.

And Lizzie was now asking herself with creditable honesty if, after all, there was not something that she had undervalued in the studies and school abandoned at too early an age, and if even "in society" there was not something, besides being pretty, that "paid." If she could only have asked a wise confessor aloud! If she could but have suspected what innocent hobbies, of natural sciences, history, reading, even mathematics, will do for a woman who finds, after a certain number of years, that something has been left out or disappointing! But these must all be coupled with and pursued for the love of God and his greater glory. Then the harvest to the hungry soul!

After refreshing draughts at Philip's Spring, where they were rejoined by Dr. Leeds, the party climbed again and somewhat divided.

The doctor and Knowles fell into a geological talk over the white quartz cropping out in large, pure veins here, which drew Emmy and Cousin Cynthia on as listeners. Joey and Euzelle began a bouquet of the few field-flowers growing there, and strayed a little beyond Robert and Lizzie, who were talking indifferently on random subjects, because each had something at heart that could not rise to speech.

Just then came bounding over the lower hills a Scotch collie of Robert's which had been shut up at home, but, breaking bonds, had scented his master's course, and, following it and the carriage-track, now came leaping on, tired with his three-mile course, but wagging his tail with unmistakable delight.

"How he talks with his other tongue!" said Euzelle to Joey, both turning to watch his reception. He jumped caressingly upon Robert, with his paws muddy from a near swamp, leaving marks upon a light summer suit.

"O shabby fellow!" said Robert, laughing, as he viewed the ugly stains; "go apologize to the ladies for the plight in which you cause me to appear among them." Then, as the dog sprang up in a new access of delight at what Robert had called "the successful villainy of his escape," his master cried, "Down, Hector!" and at the same moment stepped backward to avoid a second contact.

In the sudden retreat he had not observed that the cluster of low bushes into which he trod grew at the edge of a little cliff, hardly deserving the name, though perpendicular and rocky, being no more than five feet above the lower level.

The fall would doubtless have been trivial had not the grassy knoll below held half a dozen stony knobs, of which Robert chanced to make a pillow. One of them cut a small gash in the back of his head, not deep or long; another grazed his temple and forehead in a long scratch that drew a profusion of blood, and might or might not be dangerous, according to depth. Hector was over the cliff with a bound, and stood licking his master's face with an unhappy whine, when Lizzie, who had flown rather than run down the nearest practicable path, knelt beside Robert to find him unconscious.

Of this she was not sure. He might be dead. The wound, bleeding freely, stained enough of his face and clothing to warrant extreme fear in one less interested than Lizzie, and in an instant the pent-up feelings of months, so recently played upon in varying alternations of hope and discouragement, burst forth. With a confusion of words and demonstrations she embraced him, thinking, "If he is either dead or fainting he will never know it, and my own heart is breaking."

Then, raising his head to pillow it upon herself, she saw the other wound and cried out for help. Euzelle and Joey had seen the fall from their little distance, and hastened forward, he by the more circuitous path that he knew led to the spot below, arriving too late to witness Lizzie's demonstration; but she, taking the short, straight course to the point from which she had seen him fall, stood there sooner and saw it all—heard every confused, affectionate, despairing word.

And, worse than all, she knew herself now. Written across her soul, like golden fire against a midnight sky, she saw: "Sin—you, betrothed to one man, have loved another; and double sin, for he is himself beloved and betrothed"—for no other thought could her chaste soul couple with Lizzie's action, which now confirmed all past belief. She stood there speechless, every tinge of color fading from her face, gazing on Robert, thinking, with mingled emotions: "He is dead, and I am a sinner."

Joey, looking up at her, called: "You are nearest the spring; run, wet your handkerchief, and lay it upon his face and head while I call Dr. Leeds." In the very few moments required to bring the doctor and the remaining party to the spot, Robert's returning consciousness proved the really slight extent of the injury; and when the scratch on the fore-

head was found to be much more showy than dangerous, and the cut on the back of the head stopped bleeding of its own accord, there was time to observe the absence of Euzelle.

"I asked her to run to the spring for water," said Joey, recalling the fact, and Robert was first of the party now turning in that direction to arrive there.

She was sitting by the spring, pale and motionless, and "begged to be excused for not returning"; said "that she tried to wet the handkerchief, and thought that she was going to fall into the spring, and then sat down and could not get up again."

"This is the real patient," said Dr. Leeds, feeling her pulse, to Cousin Cynthia, and giving her something to swallow from the cup of his pocket-flask. He was only in time, for, lifting her eyes and seeing Robert bending over her, careless, in his real anxiety, of what any one "thought," the whole picture passed before her eyes again—Lizzie's embraces, her own guilt, Robert not dead but alive; and, falling back, but for the stimulant she, too, would have fainted. "I think that it is time that this party of pleasure ended," said Robert dryly to Cousin Cynthia, and, following the hint given, she proposed that the lunch brought for a later hour should be served now. It was a more graceful method

of speeding the departure than Robert's upset wits as well as brain would have thought out. With Emmy and Joey, and the other unenlightened and really hungry guests, Mrs. Russell covered the silence of the three sufferers as adroitly as possible, and after the lunch return was easily suggested.

Euzelle, still sitting by the spring, though recovered, had not spoken except in answer to inquiries, until, as they were about to enter the carriages, she stood for a moment beside Robert. "Dear child!" said he in a voice that could not hide its tenderness, "it was the merest hurt; tell me that your fright has passed."

"It has, indeed," she said; "but oh! take me home," she pleaded, "and leave me at the church as soon as possible."

He could only think, as she spoke, of the little face as he first saw it in childhood lifted to the Blessed Virgin. And so this poor soul returned accusing itself in utter pain, and was left at the church, where, as it was Saturday afternoon, she knew that a priest would be sooner or later sitting for confession.

And Lizzie, too full of her own experience for aught beside, was thinking of Mr. Knowles' word-picture of Weetamoo holding the head of dying Alexander on the grassy mound, so little way from where she had pillow'd Robert's.

"Had he died, like Alexander, who knows what a savage I might have become!" said she. "My heart would have turned to stone. But he lives!"

And so the souls of these young girls, each in its way, sent up the day's work to the recording angel.





XI.

CONFSSION.

WHEN the smitten soul or passion-wrought being carries its grief to its true haven and seeks the house of God, what an impression the very senses receive on entering there! The threshold crossed, the world left behind, a single step has placed you in the presence of God. The eye instinctively seeks the crucifix of the high altar, and rests as it glances for an instant where the eloquent sanctuary-lamp keeps vigil and speaks of the Hidden One whom you seek in joy or sorrow; and in whatever mood you came, you approach silently, subdued, feeling an awe like that of the chamber of death—the awe without the pain is upon you.

When Euzelle Fernald had closed the door upon the world outside, the habits of a lifetime brought for a moment a temporary peace, and she was able to summon control in prayer that was calm. But suddenly there came a consciousness of pain in the new knowledge that had come to her that,

mingled with the conception of sin as she fancied it, stopped every habitual phase of prayer. Terrified and humbled, she could only repeat, "Miserere mei." Penitents around her came and went noiselessly to the confessional, and her eyes followed one after another shiven who, coming out, sought the sanctuary-rail with lightened hearts, with an emotion of mental hunger that she could not have reduced to words.

At the end of an hour of unsatisfied self-examination, observing a pause in the approach to the confessional, and that the priest was waiting, she felt that no longer delay was excusable, and, turning toward the Tabernacle, prayed: "Très doux Jésus, ne soyez point, mon Juge mais mon Sauveur." This petition was, from life-long usage, like the breath she drew. Then kneeling to her Confiteor and "Bless me, father, for I have sinned," heard the voice of a stranger in invocation. "As in the awful judgment," was her thought, and, opening her heart as to God, poured out her fancied guilt.

A few questions from the man of God enlightened him fully as to the nature with which he was dealing.

"It is three hours, my child, is it not, since you first became conscious of what you are now accusing yourself?"

"Yes, father."

"And you have sought the appointed means of grace as quickly as practicable to relieve your soul of this burden?"

"Yes, father."

"You are too well trained a Catholic not to know that repentance involves renunciation, without which my absolution is of no avail. Ask your heart now what its purpose is as to the future." And he proposed a test question. Like the rasp with which the dentist sets quivering the exposed nerve did this probe the secrets of her soul, showing her one unfathomed depth, and one from which for an instant her soul recoiled. How could she have been so weak, so human?

In that silence the priest was praying for her. "Until now I hold you sinless, my child," said he at last for needed encouragement, "but this is the crisis of your being, your soul's life. Pause for a moment in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament and respond to God. Will you renounce every thought and action toward any other man that would violate the vow you have made to one alone, and which would dishonor your own soul?"

Clear and firm was the response.

"With God's grace I will."

Then came some minor matters of confession, and a careful instruction from the priest as to details of conduct in future, and absolution; and half an hour before the Blessed

Sacrament found this soul renewed and fortified.

After the early tea at Cousin Cynthia's, Robert's first real thinking-time came, and he found himself restless and unhappy; above all, he experienced an intense longing to see Euzelle again. He returned in thought to the moment of the accident, and to something, he hardly knew what, that met his returning consciousness as he found his head pillow'd on Lizzie's knee. Happily his fainting left him ignorant of the most of what had occurred, but some slight demonstration, unseen to the others, nearly intangible in itself, but conveying an impression to him from which he shrank and evaded as far as possible, now recurred in memory, and he shuddered in this warm summer evening.

"Some one walks over your grave," said Cousin Cynthia, smiling at the superstition.

"That may well happen on this crowded earth," said he, smiling back; then after a pause, at thought of his grave, he said:

"There's a spot finally where a man can be alone."

To Cousin Cynthia it sounded as if he would have liked to say, "be let alone," but she would not say it, remarking instead:

"You make me think of old Captain Niels, who used to say 'that the happiest moment of life was when he weighed anchor,' and that

at such a time he always said, 'I'm clear now, and there's no getting at me.'"

Robert fell thinking again. This time it was of Euzelle. Why had she so nearly fainted and become ill? Why had she asked him to leave her at church, as he had done, all white and silent still? Why had she been more terrified than the others? Could it be? Here a thought of a dangerous nature obtruded. He would not have liked Euzelle to be faithless to John Woodville, he would have despised her could she have faltered in her fidelity in action; but would it not be pleasant to think that while she would not be less than herself, or untrue to her pledge, this sweet thought might be his, not hers: She could have loved me a thousand-fold more?

Ah! Satan, Satan, how varied thy wiles and snares, and which of them more cunning than those which simulate innocence? She must marry John Woodville, of course; but oh! how sweet could be their friendship still. And then a thought was born deliciously: "He will be the husband of her daily living, but I—I shall be the husband of her soul." And he was nearly smiling when he remembered that Euzelle, too, must have seen the couch that Lizzie Ashford had made.

He sprang to his feet exclaiming:

"And what the deuce didn't she see? Who knows what was not done when I did not

know it? And she doubtless thinks that we're engaged anyway; Lizzie does contrive, in such unfathomable ways not to be escaped, to take possession of me."

Then a picture of jealousy arose, based on the sweeter vision, and again the craving to seek Euzelle. He went out in the cool of the approaching evening, believing that he was going to Madame Martial's to ask if Euzelle were quite recovered; believing, too, that he was sufficiently excused in doing so by her pallor and illness of the day. But once out in what the French so well name the "grand" air, the wide out-doors, reason and honor prevailed.

"I've no right to do it," said he. "God forbid that this sweet soul should suffer through me!" And he turned in the opposite direction and walked off at a brisk pace. Without aim other than the picture of having seen her there last, he went toward the church.

An interval in the coming and going of penitents became so long that the strange priest left the confessional, and, seeing none likely to approach, stepped out into the mild, warm air of twilight and slowly approached the fence. Robert, passing by, looked up, at first without recognition, then, at the appeal of a voice and outstretched hand, explained:

"Father Hubert! In this uncertain light I did not know you, or you are changed; you are—you are thin, you are ill."

But Father Hubert, for it was he, evaded the question and became interrogator in turn.

Salutations between the sterner sex in America are wont to be brief, and as the pair walked up and down the churchyard silence soon prevailed. "What are you doing here?" asked Robert, and he learned that he had come to assist at the *Quarant' Ore*, or Forty Hours' Devotion, that would open on the morrow.

"At present I am listening to confessions."

The word struck Robert. "I wonder what you would say to mine?" said he in a voice that impressed Father Hubert as less steady than his friend's usual full, firm tone.

"You can put it to the test," said the priest, entering into his humor—"open confession in the open air, without seal save that of honor, without absolution save that of a man's own conscience."

"It is because I am trying to keep that clean that I suffer," said Robert, forgetting that he had not before hinted at this truth. And step by step the story was told.

"I thought that I knew that voice," said the priest to himself as Robert named Euzelle. "And so it was for Elliott that she has suffered so deeply, so innocently, thus far."

"If I only knew," said Robert, "how far she responds to my feeling—just how far I could safely go without harm to her."

"How closely do you store your matches and your gunpowder, Elliott?"

But at this point they were interrupted by the arrival of a baptismal party, and with a hurried adieu they separated.

"I see," said Robert, "that this has to end in any, in every form of indulgence. Friends in courtesy we may be, but with a care that excludes every thought of tenderness or sentiment. I must be with her as I should be with Emmy or Lizzie, or any other of the girls when they are married; as I should wish all men to be to her could she have been my wife."

But those two poor little words in brevity brought a picture to his mind that upset the previous train of thinking, and the pavement flashed under his stormy stride as he left the churchyard, still a prey to conflicting emotions. "Open confession" without absolution had not proved peace-giving. "I wonder what the other kind could do?" queried he.

Euzelle could have answered.

So small a group were gathered on Mrs. Russell's piazza this evening that the talk became personal and confidential. As Robert ascended the steps he heard Lizzie say:

"She's very fanciful. Last Sunday I went to the Catholic church with her as a compliment. I thought it very droll to see those altar-boys bobbing about so much,

especially bowing to each other after some genuflection, and said afterwards that I should have thought it impossible for them to keep their faces straight when they turned and looked at each other behind the priest—little Tim Rourke and Bill Christy, who had been playing marbles together or fighting, perhaps, an hour before." Mr. Knowles must come to the rescue then and say:

"Don't you know that the altar is a very unsecularizing position? The children are no longer Tim Rourke or Bill Christy to each other, but St. Mary's altar-boys; they lay down the boy of the play-ground with their coats, and, in putting on their cassock and surplice, invest themselves with new characters." And then Miss Fernald said in that peculiar way of hers:

"When the altar-boys take that position I always think of the picture of the cherubim on the ark, with faces opposite and looking down at the mercy-seat."

"I don't see," said Emmy, "why people go to confession on Saturdays. The girls at our house every once in a while go to church on a Saturday afternoon. I don't see why anybody wants to be forgiven any more on a Saturday than any other day; do you, Mr. Elliott?"—Robert now appearing; but he, with only a polite salutation and single remark, passed on to the interior of

the house. The remark was: "I don't see why some people want to be forgiven at all, their souls are so white already"—which set Emmy's eyes wide open in surprise, and, like a dart, went straight and sure to the mark at which it was aimed. Lizzie was too wise to take the compliment to herself.

The party had hardly renewed conversation when it was again interrupted, this time by a servant from Madame Martial's asking if Mr. Elliott would come over for a few moments. No one thought of asking a question, and the well-taught domestic gave no hint. Robert's fancy was as busy as those he left behind, and, fear getting the better of him in his excited condition, he dwelt chiefly on possibilities harmful to Euzelle. In five minutes he stood in Madame's presence, reading a letter that she handed him on entering. It was heavily edged with black, and was from Miss Elizabeth Woodville to Euzelle.

John Woodville was dead!

The letter was brief, as suits occasions of grief, and the writer was deeply attached to her brother, who one fine English morning, in clearing a hedge, got entangled, gun in hand, and it was the common story—"Accidental discharge." They were bringing him home; the funeral might occur any day within the next three or four, on the steamer's arrival. Madame was "troubled to find

an escort for her young friend; would Mr. Elliott ascertain if any one was going on Monday, since there was no time to telegraph for Patrick?"—now a staid married man, serving Euzelle as coachman, and, at need, as protector, for she had never journeyed alone.

Robert promised to arrange the matter, and, after such inquiries for Euzelle as politeness dictated, took his leave in all the tranquillity that the usages of good society demand, receiving the numberless "expressions" on the part of Madame with equal good breeding. Outside the door the pent-up volcano could no longer be restrained. In indecent, wicked haste, an artificial world would say, his beating heart drove to his lips the cry, "She is mine, all mine!" and he went on quoting his favorite, "Maud" of Tennyson. Then he turned to where a light shone from an upper room, and, with an emphasis worthy the savage wooing he had hinted at in the morning, said:

"I wish that we were all Wampanoags and over on Mount Hope to-night."

And the fair woman in her chamber, rising from her knees, looked at her beads and said:

"If I had not made 'a good confession' where would my communion be to-morrow?" And her soul was still honest in the sight of God.



XII.

INFORMAL BETROTHAL.

COUSIN CYNTHIA went home with Euzelle. Robert proposed it to her as coolly as he would have suggested a walk under the elms of the Common; and she, who had not seen New York in nine years, went sensibly and without ado, as being the most helpful thing to friends in need. Once there Euzelle kept her a fortnight. There was a critical and trying moment to be lived through—two of them, indeed—and Euzelle thought that she should be stronger for Cousin Cynthia's presence.

The funeral was much quieter than it would have been in winter, the fashionable friends all being out of town. The Woodvilles themselves had come up from Long Branch, and would not summon their friends as to a party. This was a relief to Euzelle, who had determined not to be paraded, and it allowed a delay in something that had to be spoken sooner or later.

It was the day after the funeral; Mrs. Wood-

ville had been talking and weeping with Rose Wallace over souvenirs, trifles of daily life in old times, to which each could add untiringly. They seemed such inconsequential things to Euzelle, who wondered that they could go on so for hours over such little nothings. An open work-box carried her thoughts, by association, to her own, when a self-accusing blush tinged her face, and she thought: "I should have been just like them, after all, if"—oh! she could not bear to think—"if it had been Robert!"

But she must wait no longer; honor appealed. Gathering her courage like a garment about her, she came and knelt before Mrs. Woodville.

"There is something that I ought to say," she began in a tremulous voice; then, with a hidden sign of blessing, she continued firmly: "You know that I would have kept my word with John, and been the best wife that I possibly could—"faithful unto death.'" Here she faltered again; it wasn't out yet. She continued: "But I was not—not—like Rose here," she stammered, like the woman that she was, jumping at the conclusion so sure, but such as no man would have dared to name.

"You are an honest soul, Euzelle," said Mrs. Woodville, after a silence that was terrible to the girl, "and I believe that you would have been what you say. But consolation is

dealt to me by strange processes. Bitter as is my grief for my only son to-day, it is not so keen as it would have been to have known him wedded to an unloving wife. Ah! God," said she, "I have looked upon sights that you have never seen: households veiled in decent living, where pale wives in name, but nuns in truth, lived out their unloved, unloving lives, and husbands sought refuge from the cold, unsympathetic centre which ought to light and warm. The worst of them 'had it out,' as men say, in ways not to be thought of, far less to name; the best of them grew saintly in mutual martyrdom; between these were shades and stages of a misery that must follow unloving alliances. Poor John!" she continued, "it might have been worse with you. But, child," she resumed in a different tone, "you are blameless, and would have been; it would have been the fault of an evil system, and I shall not love or respect you less for what you have told me." But it was clear that she would love Rose more as they wept together again. And in John's trunk was found in a half-written letter an allusion to some trivial present which he "hoped Euzelle won't mind my bringing home to Rose, as I'm sure she is not of a jealous disposition."

Cousin Cynthia passed a rare fortnight in New Rochelle. The atmosphere of Euzelle's

household, studiously maintaining the former traditions, was a delight as great to her as it had been of old to Robert, and helped her understanding of the romance thrown about that episode of his youth. Of Suzanne, old but vigorous still, in her unchanged costume and graceful, decorous manner, Cousin Cynthia said that "she ought to be kept in a glass case and on exhibition."

Even Patrick had grown lofty in this training, and instructed as best he could his wife, a rollicking Limerick girl.

The fortnight ended, Cousin Cynthia returned to Bristol alone. As she stood in the hall for final leave-taking, standing alone with Euzelle, she asked:

"When may I let Robert come?" And Euzelle knew that this was wooing, though unbidden.

When Mrs. Russell had asked the question of Euzelle she thought of her "young savage," as she had named him on the fruitful Mount Hope day, and saw him in the impatient, impulsive estate that she understood well enough. She knew that as long as she stayed he would endure it in some fashion, feeling as if he were, in a way, beside her with Euzelle; but once at home, she knew that he would be like the drawn arrow in the stretched bow.

Euzelle's answer to Cousin Cynthia had come after a rather prolonged silence. She

had thought of every one's feelings rather than her own, and so, guided by an instinct belonging to a fine nature, had finally replied: "Ask Mrs. Woodville." Had Euzelle been a born diplomatist she could not have done better, yet in her entire unselfishness she attained the same result. Mrs. Woodville, once enlisted, would be her best friend and strongest ally against every critical tongue; yet this thought had never entered Euzelle's mind. Her one thought had been to spare Mrs. Woodville pain, and she did not dream that Cousin Cynthia would write her on the morrow.

But so it was; and Mrs. Woodville, who from the first moment of Euzelle's speech knew in what school the girl must have learned her own heart, was not surprised.

A firm believer in affection before marriage, her sympathies naturally lent themselves to the situation; and as she reflected that there had never been any love-making between John and Euzelle, the way was easier.

"Let him come to me first," she said; and Robert, for her sake waiting yet another week, won her friendship at the outset. It was a tension that tested him to the utmost, and, as he came eventually to speak very freely to Mrs. Woodville, he said:

"My heart sank when I lost her out of sight the second time—the first had so nearly lost her to me."

Improbable as it may seem to the unreflective mind, the stronger Robert's demonstration of his deep feeling, the fuller her own sympathy; and this not only from a most congenial, responsive nature that found her own nature repeating itself, but in its way it afforded her indirect consolation in her grief.

Out of the unselfishness of three hearts, and the large-mindedness of Euzelle, this threefold friendship grew to something truly consoling and permanent; and finally the Woodville girls, who had at first been a little inclined to resent the position, were won, and they pronounced fairly and fully for Robert. Euzelle had always been a favorite. And so the weeks wore on.

October came, and Robert, who had never brought himself to the trial of a separation, even for one or two days, began to find the business of life interrupted. Managing as best he could by letter and telegram, and once or twice paying the expenses of clerks to come to him, affairs began to press for his attendance. Mrs. Woodville looked on, feeling the chafing as fully as if it were expressed, yet unable to speak certain words that would come with the best grace from her.

Finally Robert came in one morning with his handful of letters, and, glancing at a despatch that was uppermost, said moodily:

“I shall have to go”—then counting—“in

three or four days at farthest"; and his bright face grew cloudy. "It is unmanly," said he, "but I believe that I am fairly superstitious about parting with her now. I feel as if, once lost out of my sight, I should not find her again."

Mrs. Woodville, who had been swallowing down obstacles to clear speech, remarked calmly:

"Why not take her with you?"

"You don't mean—?" said Robert with widening eyes, unable to proceed.

"I do, indeed; why should you separate?"

"But you—but Euzelle—will she not—don't women take a great deal of time for—preparations?" he asked, with visions of great festivities and much ado in circles of his own Southern home.

"Will you ever be more 'ready'?" she asked. "And as for Euzelle, I have heard her express herself very strongly indeed against large weddings, which hurt her Catholic feelings, to say nothing of it being a matter of good taste under the present circumstances." And despatching him to plead his own cause, she went to weep over John's portrait.

Euzelle was not a little startled, and, as Robert anticipated, said directly: "But the Woodvilles?" For the cunning fellow had kept Mrs. Woodville's own message and plan for his masterful trump.

"I suppose, as she says, that we can never be more ready as to our wishes," said Euzelle, with the meaning that a child of twelve would have given the words, and nearly surprised Robert into such demonstration as, however, he knew Euzelle too well to offer, but which would have been a Protestant girl's perquisite from the outset.

Robert had been most reverential, most restrained, and in the restriction felt a satisfaction at withholding, in the fulness of his first love, that which other girls had courted again and again in mere flirtation. He dared not, and he was glad that he did not dare. O foolish girls "who cheapen heaven," as the poet sings it!





XIII.

ESPOUSALS.

EHEY were married on the fourth day from this, with only the assembled households, Suzanne and the servants, and the Woodvilles, and a few friends of Euzelle's most intimate with her father and grandmother, at an hour too early to tempt a curious world into church to look on.

They came upon Cousin Cynthia in Bristol, taking her by momentary surprise, yet nothing more, so well did she understand the pair, Robert's ardor and Euzelle's unselfishness; and after a day or two, so quiet that no one knew they were there, Robert had set business in train for another ten days, and they were off to Niagara—because Euzelle had not seen it.

The week's issue of the local paper set tongues wagging freely, and extra copies of the Bristol *Phoenix* were ordered in several households for the marriage notice.

Niagara for a bridal tour was pronounced "hackneyed," and this was said one day in Cousin Cynthia's presence.

“Hackneyed?” was her prompt response. “So it is for saints to go to heaven, but they won’t stop going because its old-fashioned; and you’d jump at the chance to get to either place, married or unmarried.” And this was one of the things that caused Mrs. Russell to be called “a hateful old thing” again. She certainly could retort, but then she did not often do so.

Another critic pronounced the step taken as one of “indecent haste,” and said, with intent to provoke her, that “society in Bristol would not tolerate it.” She did not “provoke” satisfactorily, and replied in a dry tone:

“Society in Bristol will have to swallow many a bigger pill than that, as it has done, and does daily”—instancing a case or two where flagrant and continued immorality was welcomed in its perpetrators wherever houses were open to wealth and family name; dissolute young men courted because they were “eligible,” and elder sinners who were “influential.”

“Now,” said she, “think it over and measure it next time *you* go to communion”—and she was addressing a worldly-wise mother of ageing, unmarried daughters. It closed conversation on that topic and made her one more enemy.

After Niagara they returned to Bristol.

But Robert would not stay in the town just then. The mad fellow had a plan of his own to carry out while Cousin Cynthia superintended the fitting-up of a house that he had hired overlooking the bay.

Robert's scheme was nothing more or less than an expedition over Indian ground while the fine October weather lasted. It had entered his mind on the day of the Mount Hope excursion that if he ever married, such should be his wedding-tour; and, finding Euzelle so enthusiastic a student then, he was sure of her interest now.

So, making arrangements at the farm-house on Mount Hope for the use of a room or two at need, Robert had placed on the eastern slope of the mount a most commodious tent, which he named the Wigwam. From here as headquarters they drove to Swansey, Taunton, Dighton, and wherever Indian history led the way, finding information not yet garnered into print, and now stored by Euzelle in her own note-books.

As two miles' driving could at any time take them into Bristol, business did not wholly stand still, but waited a little on pleasure. The season was unusually favorable, and before really cool days made tent or farm-house uncomfortable the adjacent Massachusetts ground had also been well visited, and the Tiverton and island of Rhode Island

localities studied, with the character of Awashonks and other warriors, and the exploits of Colonel Church, and his friendship and alliance with this Indian ruler.

With all the undesirable traits depicted by inimical historians, they continually found something that strengthened favorable convictions as to the nobler qualities of the so-called savage when unmolested, and Robert was surer than ever of the magnitude of the scale of being on which he was wont to predicate the huge affections and mighty griefs that he had before liked to talk about.

“To think of Philip’s sparing the whole town of Taunton at great sacrifice to his own plans, for fear a single Leonard should be harmed!” said he. “Match it, if you can, in modern warfare, where all perishes before expediency. What general ever saved a town for a single family’s benefit, or who would not deride him if he did? Yet Philip knew that Taunton must cost him dearly.”

And Awashonks’ fidelity to Church was canvassed in all its bearings, temptations measured, and the old admiring conclusions strengthened. They visited Church’s grave at Little Compton Commons, on which is inscribed, “Ye Hon. Col. Benjamin Church Esqire,” which Euzelle pronounced rather pompous for Puritans; and they had more than once during the preceding summer

stood with Mr. Knowles and others at the foot of his old chimney, the remaining ruin of his house on Thames Street, Bristol, and fancied themselves with him at this hearth-stone listening to his *viva-voce* narratives.

And in the tranquil moments at the Wigwam Robert lived the romance which he afterwards told Cousin Cynthia would for that reason never now be written. And he lived it in the autumn glow of changing trees; and perfect autumn weather hung over sea and sky with an atmosphere that glorified everything that lived in it.

It was only in the very last days of the month that a cold northeasterly storm swept down Mount Hope Bay and drove them back to civilization. A very charming civilization they made of it. During their wigwaming Cousin Cynthia, with very detailed instruction from Robert, had been making a beautiful home for them in a cottage looking straight out over the harbor. They had agreed at the time of marriage to leave the New Rochelle home unchanged for the present, moving the servants only, and returning to it for long winter and spring visits, when city trips would be attractive. Bristol should be the summer place and real home until Robert's business interests changed.

It had not been regardless of Euzelle's wishes that Robert had made his prepara-

tions without her. She had said from the first, "I should like all the rest of it to be a surprise, too," and waited in childish curiosity for the expression of his taste. From one bit of luxury to another she passed, until, with a cry of delight, she found herself in an apartment that was clearly her own. It was as nearly as possible the duplicate of her own blue-and-white room of childish days, which Robert had seen but once and remembered. It was so delicate a tribute, and said so fully, "I remember," that with full eyes she expressed thanks that the lips refused to utter.

"But my very own old ornaments, forgotten pictures, are here," she said. "I thought this little John the Baptist lost. Is it the same? No; the frame is quite new, yet like. How have you done this?"

"I must own up," said he. "When you moved from N—— bonne-mamma, in refitting your room, discarded these old treasures, which were preserved by Suzanne, and when I asked for one she brought me all. Nothing is new; the frames have been restored, the brackets renewed—that is all. See, the little vase that so often held my flowers before your statue of the Blessed Virgin has the chipped handle still."

Opening from this was their joint apartment, in rose-color; and from here a glorious

view of cape, and bay, and island, and a wide sky-stretch opened. It was large and free.

"It is like a wonderful dream," she said, looking alternately without and within; "and this room is like the sunset clouds yonder, or more like the lips of a shell. It will be like living in a sea-shell." Whence the cottage took its name, and was thereafter known to intimates as The Sea-Shell.

Altogether, marrying without preparation or ado had proved a satisfactory experiment, and it was not until the return to town and receptions began that anything troublesome was suggested. Then came sundry formalities and social exchanges, and after a while they settled into grooves, as people are wont to do.

On Sundays our pair often dined with Madame Martial after Vespers, and usually, returning home, went out of the way to call on Cousin Cynthia. Robert's first selfishness appeared when he wanted and missed Euzelle on the days in which she maintained her former habits of visiting the poor; and once or twice, when the recipients of his wife's bounty crowded the little kitchen, he pretended to find the air close afterward, and aired the room with some stir. After this Euzelle took pains to choose an hour when he was sure to be absent, and was not at all

vexed with him; nor had Robert dreamed of giving offence by his own action. She had said after the airing-out: "There were a good many of them, and their clothes were steamy from rain, they sat so near to the stove."

The Pickerings were frequent visitors and always acceptable, and Cousin Cynthia was quite at home under all circumstances, even when Robert had headaches, which happened occasionally, and she taught Euzelle how he liked to be treated then. After a while Lizzie Ashford came, too. At about the time of the marriage Lizzie was quite sick, and gossip liked to couple it with her disappointment. Gossip gave her credit for enough of that, and she felt yet more than she was credited with. It was a smart, stinging blow; she had been denied the first thing that she had ever wished for in her life, but she had never wished anything like this.

She had suspected the meaning of Robert's prolonged absence, and Cousin Cynthia had tried to prepare her for the blow; but when it came she was not fully prepared, and it stunned her. No woman with such a strong and ungoverned will as Lizzie's could ever be quite prepared for its denial. She went away and made a long visit on her recovery from illness, and did not return until after Christmas, when she called

upon Euzelle, who welcomed her, as she could well afford to do. Robert had been abundantly able to satisfy her long since that she had no cause for jealousy there. It was almost a pity that Euzelle could not appreciate how exceptionally she was loved in this first mature blooming of Robert's affection, for she innocently supposed all women must find the same.

She felt, therefore, only a noble pity for Lizzie that could be but delicately manifested; so to her she extended her freest invitations, exerting herself doubly to make her visits agreeable, and, had the natures and training of these two women been alike, would have conquered her with kindness from the outset.

But Lizzie failed to appreciate the motive in availing herself of the action, taking as a right what Euzelle graciously accorded, and what should have been esteemed a favor. Some of her remarks were injudicious and misquoted. "Was I not a friend of Mr. Elliott's before his marriage?" said she, "and should that ceremony be a reason for renouncing it?" And talking in this vein, with her frequent visits, gave occasion to gossip again.

"Lizzie Ashford don't mean to give him up, after all," said a common talker.

"That's the fashion of the day," replied another of the same grade.

No hint or rumor reached Euzelle's ear. There was an atmosphere about her too repellent of gossip about others to allow a breath of suspicion that was personal to be wafted to her, and so she escaped even the annoyance of the indignant scorn that it would have occasioned her.

And Robert, who at first disliked Lizzie's frequent visits, seeing Euzelle so kindly disposed toward her once supposed rival, dismissed his old grudge, and, man-fashion, lazily accepted the really pleasing addition that Lizzie often made to their circle; for she well knew how to make herself agreeable.

"What is Lizzie Ashford trying to gain out of this?" asked Cousin Cynthia of her own heart silently, unwilling to believe harm, yet unable to explain the problem. To her it was clear that Lizzie did not like Euzelle, had never liked her, and would, while avoiding open comment, not unfrequently exhibit words and actions in a light that others must construe to her injury; and this had happened only by the very facilities that Euzelle had afforded her.

"She eats her salt and violates her honorable confidence," said Cousin Cynthia to herself. Still, there was no skeleton in the house, no real secret hid there, and Lizzie had done no worse than women do every

day of their lives, in holding up to criticism little household ways, differences of custom, French or Catholic ways in a New England town.

Had Lizzie Ashford been asked Cousin Cynthia's question to herself she would have been unable to answer it, or have replied vaguely, "What do I mean? Why, nothing in particular; I'm just drifting, getting as good a time out of life as I can." Some years later, when self-examination had become an established habit, she said, referring to this time:

"I believe that I had the most fixed will of any obstinate creature on the face of this earth. My father used to say that 'Lizzie would have her way if the devil stood at the door to hinder'; and I am sure that, after years of excessive indulgence, I never knew what it meant to yield. I loved Robert Elliott, and the idea of marrying him, once in my mind, could not be dispossessed. When he married Euzelle I was stopped; it was as if something had taken away my breath. But when I breathed again Robert Elliott was in my heart and mind still. I had no purpose, certainly no thought, of what the world calls wrong, guilt, nor did I think that he ever loved any one but Euzelle; but one day, I don't know when or how, the thought struck me that she might die, and, unlikely as it may seem,

I cherished the idea. I should not believe it if told of another, but that was my thought. I could not change my mind, or thought that I could not, once the idea had fixed itself; and I believe that I sat down, so to speak, waiting for that woman to die. And the second thought was, to make myself so necessary to Robert that, with the opportunity, he could never turn aside from me again. This was not as clear to me as it is now, but, without fairly understanding myself, I worked on with such feelings as these motives gave rise to, studying the man and his tastes, which were developing, as keenly as I had ever done in former days when I had distinct hopes."

And Robert's real love for his wife, and Euzelle's return of it, and especially the innocence and unsuspicion of her nature, saved three people from peril. Sometimes she saw Lizzie's eyes resting on her with an expression that troubled her; but she always accused herself, and wondered that "it was so much harder to love Lizzie than Emmy and the rest." Once she said: "I must have been a jealous woman, and the effect of the sin has followed me still"—for she knew that she was not jealous now. No woman could have been, under the régime that Robert ordained. He exhausted devices in expression, only to re-create them.

In the spring they went abroad and spent some months in Germany, furthering and enlarging all Robert's business plans, and then had a little pleasuring in Paris and at the home of Euzelle's ancestry. They returned in June, and all Robert's dreams of the winter past had been to renew the Indian dream on Mount Hope, even talking of a birchen canoe for short excursions; but perfect things in life rarely repeat themselves, and this could not happen again.

Early in August a son was born, and baptized with several names, of which they finally chose that of Fernald to use habitually. There had been just enough of peril at the time to make Robert anxious and grateful, and, in feeling that Euzelle had been given back to him from danger, to reproach himself with some selfishnesses that she had failed to discover. There was no doubt that Robert liked to control whatever business he had in hand, and this arose from a clear perception of the way in which things ought to be done, and which was apt to be seen by him sooner than by others around him. Proven to be right, his perspicacity was accepted and he became a leader naturally. Too kindly to become tyrannical, too gentlemanly to assert himself openly with his fellows, he sometimes had the appearance of ruling, and with a woman of different disposition from Euzelle

could have come into polite opposition, if not conflict.

Little Fern was very like his mother in person—so much so that it was often remarked that “he ought to have been a girl,” as if there were some feminine obligation from the resemblance. Robert was very proud of him, and one day, in the presence of Father Hubert, who was now settled in Providence and sometimes visited them, tossed the little fellow up, remarking: “God hasn’t spoiled my good time yet.” “Your cross is fashioned and waiting somewhere; may it be no heavier than your need!” said the priest, thinking of the measure that people make on the surface of things.

Euzelle had one of her own that she bore hopefully, but it made itself felt as time wore on; and Robert, in his attendance on Mass and entire concession to all that her faith required, did it without apparent interest in the faith itself. They read much together, and Robert submitted himself not only to the instruction of books, but to conversations with Euzelle and Catholic friends whom he sometimes met. One day, being questioned by one of the latter as to why he was not yet a Catholic, he replied: “There is not enough opposition in me to make a convert of; I like Catholics and the Church so well that there’s no controversy to start on.” “And you are

too happy to feel the want of anything beyond," said the friend.

It is probable that to no human being were ever given two more enjoyable years or more complete worldly happiness than those first two years of married life vouchsafed Robert Elliott; and when his wife spoke of God's goodness, and loved to talk of Him in moments of deep and holy feeling, he would think: "What a charm religion lends to woman's character!" But of God in His personality, and of his own relationship to Him, he had very nearly the same sentiment that he would have experienced if some returned traveller had dwelt enthusiastically upon some exceptionally wise and humane chief of the desert, or Persian shah, or Tartar khan where tyranny was to be expected. It was nice to listen to, but a great way off, and did not concern him.





XIV.

THE "GOOD TIME" SPOILED.

Twas on the second anniversary of their wedding-day that Robert, convalescing from an attack of sore throat that had housed him during a week, looked out over the broad bay, sullen with gathering storm, and then, as two or three times before in the same half-hour, up the street to see if Euzelle were not coming. Five minutes more of delay developed an impatience that the week's caging did not moderate; but here she was at last, and she came in with the mail that she had gone to seek.

There was a letter from Mrs. Woodville, who had been ill for several months, but whose health at the present time rendered a change imperative. She was ordered to Florida at once, must go next week, and wrote urging Robert and Euzelle to come to her without delay. It was not a formal farewell, but both felt it to be such, and a summons not to be refused. For Robert, just escaping quinsy, it was impossible; Euzelle

must go without him. She had little Fern nearly weaned, and had been discussing measures of final separation that very day. But the separation from Robert! More than once had he spoken with dread of its ever happening, repeating the very words he had once used to Mrs. Woodville about losing her out of his sight, coupling it with presentiment.

They agreed that she must go to New York on the morrow, and then the great, cowardly fellow actually turned to the window with tears in his eyes, Euzelle cooing pretty nothings to console him. "It wouldn't be so bad if the sun shone, I think," he said; "but those ugly gathering clouds below frown at me like angry menaces, and I will own to superstition—what you will: name it—but I have an untold dread of letting you go."

With a sleepless night Robert looked so pale and wretched in the morning as to draw out all the tenderness of his wife's heart toward him, and many trifles that were said and done in consequence were later recalled in moments that made them priceless.

The very last words of her leave-taking, after those of common affection to the child and the man, were, seeing his utter despondency, "Dear Robert, what is there left but to trust in God?" She went her way, and the rising tide, hurried by the southeast wind, broke on the shore with a cadence that seemed

to repeat her words, so he said them over and over again to himself; but oh! they meant so little to him.

The day grew stormy and inexpressibly dreary, and little Fern fretted in the afternoon and in the night cried twice, even his beloved old Suzanne, who idolized him, being unable to console him for a time. But some sleep came finally and helped, and the morning, though a little colder than before, was clear and sunny, and brought a telegram of Euzelle's safe arrival. Robert stirred about, ordering fires outside the nursery, on which the servants commented; for he was glad to avoid all details of housekeeping, domestic orders of every kind coming habitually from Mrs. Elliott.

This was on Friday. On Saturday a letter was received from Euzelle saying that Mrs. Woodville's illness had been so great that all preparations for her departure were being hurried that she might leave on Monday; that, therefore, she—Euzelle—would leave New York on Monday night by one of the lines of steamers instead of waiting for the trains of Tuesday.

"It will bring us together some hours sooner," said she; "and with all my occupation with Mrs. Woodville I have time to miss you and Fern so." Then it seemed as if, in reviving the allusion to the invalid, her critical

situation was suggested forcibly, and she added a postscript including some saying of Mrs. Woodville's, to which she had replied: "As I did to you, dear heart, what is there left but to trust in God?" These words her last again. "What is it to trust in God?" asked Robert, looking out across the golden sparkle of the harbor-waves.

On Tuesday morning Robert sent a boy with the pony-team to the wharf to meet the boat from Fall River, which leaves after the arrival of the New York steamer, never doubting that Euzelle would have come by that line. Patrick was no longer an adjunct, the ménage in Bristol admitting of no coachman-resident, and both carriages being kept at a stable, and for this reason Euzelle had gone to New York alone. "It is time that I learned to take care of myself," she had said, "and I shall find plenty of ladies doing as I do. It is always the case." And Robert, who had been used to this custom, did not realize Euzelle's inexperience. From bonne-mamma's régime she had been transferred to his guardianship, journeying in the interval with the aid of Patrick or some of the maids, and so it was that she went astray returning.

The Woodvilles, all-solicitous for their invalid, had accepted Euzelle's assurances of independence, and thought that, in going as in coming, her journey would be short and easy

of accomplishment. When Euzelle bought her tickets she did not perceive that she had purchased them at the office of a line running to Providence instead of Fall River, and bearing classic names—*Oceanus*, *Metis*, etc., etc.—and, on discovering her error, the coachman was told that she had barely time to reach the boat, and would be too late for either line should she return to exchange. She was hurried on board, as it happened, without time to telegraph Robert.

He was sitting by the same window watching for her coming, impatient because the carriage was ten minutes later than he thought it ought to be, and when he saw it coming without her a singular feeling of vexation attacked him. "Where is Mrs. Elliott?" asked he of the boy, as if the lad could report more than her non-appearance; then, ordering him to wait instead of returning to the stable, enveloped himself in warm outer garments and drove to the post-office to see if the early mail brought any announcement of change in her plans. There was no letter, so he went to the railway-station and sought a despatch from the telegraph-office—none had been received.

"She has come by train, then, to-day, after all, and I must wait for the afternoon arrival from Providence," thought he, and, feeling tired with these first exertions since his illness, went home. Had he been walking he

would have heard rumors just telegraphed from Providence of "an accident on the Sound," but he drove rapidly and spoke to no one. As he went to the nursery to make inquiries for little Fern, the infant looked up and smiled, with an expression so like his mother's that Robert perceived it with pleasure, thinking, "How very like her he is!" But it renewed his annoyance. "Mamma will come to-night, little man," he said, more for his own consolation than the child's, as he caressed him; but the little one, at the name incautiously used, looked expectant, then burst into bitter tears, calling "Mamma!" in baby fashion.

In the afternoon he drove to the train, too impatient to care for the reproof she would make at his exposure in going out so late. He had not asked for his morning paper at the news-room as he passed before, he had been so disappointed, so annoyed; but he took it now, folded and put it in his pocket. The train arrived without her, and he drove back for the newly-arrived mail. Not a word from Euzelle. As he stepped into the phaeton a newsboy's cry of "Extras" reached his ear, and the single word "accident" as well. He turned to drive back to the telegraph-office, when a voice shrieked, clear and close, "*Extra Bulletin! Details of the accident on the Sound last night.*"

He signalled the boy, bought a copy "to quiet his nervousness," as he told himself, looked at the heading, "Loss of the *Acis*," and was comforted thereby. She never would have taken that line. Then he telegraphed Mr. Woodville's partner, knowing that it would be useless to address any member of the absent family, and arranged that the Bristol operator should forward a despatch at any hour of the evening. "The wires," said that functionary, "are greatly occupied with the accident, and the amount of private telegraphing in connection therewith is unusual."

It had taken the gentleman addressed until midnight to follow up Euzelle's movements, and, through the driver she had employed, learn her mistake; and that only from an employee of the Fall River line, who remembered the lady's error and had instructed her driver to go to the other pier. Happily he remembered the man, who described the lady so well, and her conversation, full of anxiety and timidity; and she had asked so minutely about the hour of arrival in Providence, with reference to the connection with Bristol trains, that Mr. Woodville's partner felt obliged to reply: "I fear that Mrs. Elliott was on the *Acis*."

This message greeted Robert in the morning. He had been at the door of the telegraph-office awaiting the operator, and was on the point of driving to his house for him. To

take the next train to Providence, thence to Stonington, was his immediate action, with only a message to his household. From Stonington he had to drive to Watch Hill, the present horrible harvest-ground of the wreck. From the journals and extras purchased en route he gathered such news as the public receive, and already a list was given of those whose safety or loss was at this hour assured.

Years afterward he would start up in troubled sleep, repeating the death-roll like a litany of dolors, and for a long time he could not waken without reciting a paragraph headed "Unknown," describing a woman of Euzelle's age, but wholly differing in person. It wrung his heart in such alternations of suggestive fear and positive relief. It was not she; but what like fate might be hers!

At Stonington the ghastly hints of what he was to encounter began. There had been several removals during the preceding afternoon, but the harvest of recovery had been more than equal, and Robert turned shuddering from the luggage-room and funeral-freighted car, to meet only silent or stricken groups in the waiting-rooms. Even the drivers of carriages were silenced, and as he looked about to seek a conveyance one of them, instinctively recognizing his need, said in a low voice, "To Watch Hill, I suppose, sir?" as an assumption rather than inquiry.

There were four other vehicles engaged by those situated like Robert, or more terribly sure of their errand, and they moved away from the station in a procession. Coming up from the shore were two such carriages, one after fruitless search, the other accompanied by a farmer's wagon transformed to a temporary hearse. The drivers and meeting party uncovered their heads, save those who were too much overcome by a fresh access of sorrow.

Arrived at Watch Hill, there was the ordeal of recognition to encounter, and Robert sat down half-fainting at the door of a building that for some minutes he was unable to enter. A shriek from within brought him to his feet, and he staggered in to see a lady, whom he recognized as a companion of his journey from Providence, fall senseless upon a form in which she had recognized her son. There was at this moment but one other still tenant of the solemn room, who had been a man also, and Robert, going forth, hurried to the shore—anywhere away from the harrowing spot, away from beings who could see or speak to him. At such a distance as he felt alone he threw himself forward on the sand.

“There's plenty like that when they first come,” said one of the drivers to a bystander, who, relieved since his own arrival by a telegram announcing the safety of one he sought,

looked around compassionately on those with whom an hour before he had feared to be in bitter sympathy. "That man'll lie there p'raps a couple of hours or more, and then he'll get up an' walk a couple more, an' then he'll begin to think what's to be done, and want to see every living soul left of those 't were on board, an' that's the time the advertising agents 'll board him. They know enough to keep away now." "If I dared I would go to him," said the man addressed. "Guess you'd better not," said the driver; "I shouldn't like to. Natur's havin' on 't out now, an' it's the best way. It 'll save his bein' crazy, mebbe."

It was about five o'clock P.M. when Robert's own driver ventured to approach him. "They've just carried up a child," said he, with inquiry in his tone. Robert shook his head. The man moved away, but presently returned. "I'm afraid we shall have to go soon," said he, in as kind a tone as he could manage; "I'll bring you back early in the morning, and, if you can give your mind to it now, you might want to put something in the paper."

Then it was that, seeing Robert slowly approach the carriage, an advertising agent ventured near. They had it all systematized among themselves; each took his turn, and they were really less obnoxious than could

have been expected. This agent gave a list of newspapers to Robert, who quietly glanced at it, marking the prominent ones, and was about to return it to the agent, who said, "You haven't marked any of these," pointing to several locals. "Are they of any importance?" asked Robert, absently. "They are the shore locals," said the agent, "and might be worth more than any you have marked." And then Robert had to go away again to gather strength, as the meaning was clear. Then he was obliged to write the description, in which, harrowing as was the ordeal, the agent's skill and promptitude spared him, and the man had the delicacy never to look at him once. Robert drove back to Stonington for the night.

On the second following day a merchant of Boston, who had been among the rescued, returned to see if there was any salvage of freight, and, having read the advertisement, recognized the lady as one that he had seen soon after leaving New York, and again for an instant at the moment of the accident. "She was kneeling down then," he told Robert, "and I suppose that she was a Catholic, from the little chain of beads she was saying her prayers with." And that was all that he could tell. On the third day Robert left the desolate, stormy beach to pursue his quest among the living.

In Bristol he found that little Fern had been attacked by croup, and the frightened nurse had prayed Lizzie Ashford to stay, and, indeed, was unfit, through fear, to carry out the doctor's orders. So Lizzie was nursing little Fern, and actually had him in her arms when Robert went into the nursery. The child was convalescing and greeted his father with the old smile, his mother's smile, which brought the first outburst of grief he had shown before any one who knew him. It frightened the little fellow, who clung to Lizzie, which Robert noticed; and so it was, when he went away on the morrow, he begged her not to leave Fern in his absence. "I should have sent for Cousin Cynthia," said she, "were she not confined to the house herself with a cold."

Cousin Cynthia's hired girl was waiting below, and soon came messengers of inquiry from the Pickerings, Madame Martial, and other friends, Robert's arrival being quickly known. He saw none of them, and the sad news was quickly told.

Her last words and message, "What is there left but to trust in God?" was in his heart, but his lips refused to utter the hopelessness of it, as it now seemed to him.

On Sunday, exhausted, he did not leave his room, heavy sleep coming to his aid after so many wakeful nights. On Monday morn-

ing he went to Boston, and through the entire week followed up, without result, every address that he had been able to obtain of surviving passengers on the unfortunate *Acis*. Nor for several months did he learn anything later than the communication on the beach from the merchant who had passed her praying. The next Saturday night he returned to his desolate home, and Cousin Cynthia, now sufficiently recovered, took Lizzie's place for the moment.





XV.

“IN THE HOLLOW OF HIS HAND.”

WE go back to the *Acis*. Euzelle was not aroused from sleep by the first signal of danger on board. She had been lying awake, timid and unhappy in her surroundings, and longing for morning and home. She had comforted herself at times with the thought, “Every hour is bringing me nearer”; then, dozing, some discordant movement or sound would startle her out of such uneasy slumber. At a little past midnight on Tuesday morning she rose and partially dressed herself, putting on her dress over an incomplete toilet, and, remembering a novena that she was to commence on that day, knelt to its first prayers. They were rudely interrupted.

Going in terror out of her state-room, it was to encounter other panic-stricken individuals and groups, and finally a crowd, of whom in a short time many were to be victims of an awful fate. God forbid that we should intrude farther upon that scene of

souls summoned in an instant of time to their eternity, or that we should penetrate the veil behind which some shrank in guilty, silent horror of the awful presence of death, or that we should listen to the uncaring, selfish anguish of others whose cries and whose unwonted prayers took strange forms of petition!

Death grimly offered choice for a few moments, and there were some who calmly chose between the elements. Euzelle, kneeling, was saying her rosary when a man's voice, stooping close to her ear to make itself heard in the tumult, said: "Come this way." He led her to the lower deck without a word, put a life-preserver on her, fitted one to himself, and said: "Since you are calm, something may yet be done." He had singled her out of a shrieking, hopeless group. "Have you courage to jump down there?" he asked, pointing to the water. She shuddered and shrank back. "I will hold your hand firmly," said he, and then, in a voice low and strong, added: "It is your only chance."

"May the will of God be done!" was her only spoken word as she prepared to obey him; a moment, and it was over: They were the first who had dared this, though twenty minutes later many had followed their example. There was a choice of floating ma-

terial already in the water, and, slowly swimming toward a cotton bale, her companion supported her as slightly as was needed, seized upon it, and drew her to it also. A loose piece of rope was hanging from it, with which he bound Euzelle to the bale, tearing his vest apart to save the chafing where he drew the rope tightly under her arms.

"By and by you might feel faint," he explained; "and though the life-preserved will keep you up, it would not keep your head above water." Then he told her that he believed, from the hour, that they were a little to westward of Fisher's Island, and that it would soon be ebb-tide, which would drift them into Fisher's Island Sound, if the steamer were not off her course; and the night, though not fairly starlight, was far from foggy.

He was so far mistaken as this: the ebb had set an hour before, and the "neaps" had given place to the powerful spring-tides of the new moon; the steamer had not only reached Fisher's Island, but was well off Mount Prospect when the alarm was given. By the time that Euzelle and the stranger had committed themselves to the water the boat had varied from her course so far to southeast as to bring them into the full influence of the mighty tide now pouring out through

“The Race.” Instead of drifting toward Hay Harbor they were being carried swiftly out to sea, and beyond the reach of the flood-tide which five hours later was aiding the mournful searchers of the morning at Watch Hill and the shore beyond.

Euzelle never knew at what hour the man who had been so strong and thoughtful for her fell into the danger that he had striven to avert from her. A powerful swimmer and full of courage, he was speaking to her when, without a warning sound, he let go his hold and sank backward into the chilly waters, and she was alone. He had told her that he was once a sea-captain, and he had asked her name and address, thinking of the more than possibility of his being the survivor, without giving her his own. The strong man perished, and when the dawn touched the water, making the horrible expanse around clear and magnified to her sight, the combined influences of cold, exposure, and protracted and extreme fear found Euzelle unconscious, but it was more than fainting.

It was at half-past six when the barely-commencing flood brought the bale and its burden within half a mile of an outward-bound New London schooner laden with Wethersfield onions and “shooks,” or hogs-head-hoops, for Cuba. Ever since dawn

they had encountered occasional signs of disaster in articles that had floated out with the ebb, but for the last two miles had met nothing, and the look-out was relaxing his vigilance in behalf of any possible human need when the bale was signalled. Euzelle was taken on board in a delirium of fever, and of course unable to give information of any kind; and at the hour when Robert sat awaiting the boy's return with her in the phaeton she was muttering his name in the ravings of brain fever.

That night began a series of northerly gales beyond Block Island, before which the schooner bowled along, making a passage of nine days before the island of Cuba was sighted; on the tenth they anchored before Cardenas. During the passage the captain, whose embarrassments as to the care of Euzelle had been at first great, found little opportunity for divided perplexity. He had sailed "short-handed" as to crew, and his own labors and vigilance on deck by day and night during the steady gales left him little attention but the most necessary to bestow on an apparently dying woman.

"Dunno but we shall make same port as she will, and all go to Davy Jones' together," was his comment on the severest night, when, for an instant, he stood beside the berth he had sacrificed to her. "She's a pretty cree-

tur, an' 's too bad, though," said he, and then a call on deck for all hands for another reefing left her to the "hand" whose watch it was to spend with her. They watched her by turns, rendering the little care that it was possible to give, looking to death as the probability, as the captain did, each only wondering, as his turn came around, that she had lived so long. When the health-officer boarded the schooner she was duly reported, but, to avoid the delay of quarantine, was entered, and truly enough, "insane."

Taken to the hospital, the captain visited her there once to find her condition little changed, and intended to go again, but, hurried by his success in finding a cargo for New Orleans, he eventually sailed without doing so. Meantime her youth and fine constitution carried her through the term of physical disease, and she slowly rallied from the bodily prostration; but the mental shock had been so great as to destroy all recent memories. She could recall her childhood, and gradually her girlhood and marriage; but it was quite six months before she could clearly trace her life up to the time of her parting from Robert, and bring before her the picture of the terrible night on the Sound.

In December she had been pronounced sufficiently convalescent to be discharged from the hospital, and during a change of officials

what meagre outlines of her story had been gathered from the captain were lost. In their perplexity the authorities sent her to a convent ten miles up the island, where, under the care of the good Sisters, body and mind made speedier gain.

Like the gradual dissolution of mist and fog, a feeling of confusion slowly disappeared, and she came to the consciousness that she was in a foreign land, without knowing how it had happened; then as memory strengthened she began to suspect how it must be. But, wholly ignorant of the Spanish tongue, she could not hold conversation with those about her, and before she could ask any questions she had to set herself to learn the language: In her weak state, and without dictionary or grammar, it was a slow process.

One early evening in May she sat in the low-roofed piazza looking down a long vista of palms—for the convent had been built on the site of an old cafetal, or coffee estate, and on these all approaches to dwellings were habitually planted in double rows of royal palm. The low sun was weaving effects new and strange to her across the tropical foliage, and she was repeating to herself such words and phrases as she had added to her vocabulary during the day. The sudden ringing of the Angelus bell in the hasty Cuban manner fell upon her ear with startling but not un-

favorable effect. As she knelt to repeat the prayer a flood of associations and memories poured at once over her long-clouded mind, and in that instant of prayer light came fully back, reason and memory were equally established.

But with it, too, came the realization of her separation from those whom earth held dear, and the helplessness of her situation. A flood of tears relieved her aching heart, and she hastened to the chapel to pray as she had not prayed for months, with a clear brain. She felt this gain and took courage.

In the seclusion of this convent she was more effectually shut away from chances of a return to her home than she would have been in places far more remote. The communication with the outer world was limited to the confessor, who knew neither English nor French—Euzelle's only acquisition in language—and the doctor, a German by birth, who saw her only at rare intervals, the excellent health of the Sisters in this beautiful climate calling him rarely to their aid. She had been sent there as one whose feeble or deficient mind rendered her an object of charitable care, and for months her conduct justified this belief.

By dint of earnest effort and much pantomime Euzelle, drawing a map on the ground to illustrate her meaning, succeeded in con-

veying to the doctor's mind, on the occasion of his first visit after her awakening, that she wanted a map, and a very antiquated affair he brought her afterwards; but it contained an "Estados Unidos" and a dot that was named "Nueva York," which she pointed out triumphantly. She thus learned for the first time that she was on the island of Cuba.

But it was one thing to inform the doctor and Sisters that she was of New York, and quite another to arouse any interest or action on their part toward conveying her thither. There was no one to care or assume such responsibility. She did not know that she had been sent to them by the Cardenas hospital authorities, nor, had this been clear, would she have known to whom to apply for release. It had not been explained to the Sisters in general; the Mother-Superior herself only knew that the poor, demented creature had been sent from the hospital to her care, and found, in removing her miserable clothing, a much-worn scapular; she was therefore a Catholic.

Long enough was it before the word *mari-do*—husband—was picked up in this locality and added to Euzelle's vocabulary; and when she could at last, in late summer, tell something of her story, and with streaming eyes beg the Reverend Mother that something might be done to restore her to her husband and child, there were all the obstacles of want of

interest beyond. The authorities heard the story at second-hand; one set it down as the vagaries of a yet uncured mind; another said that, true or false, there was no one to assume any expenses in the matter; let her friends be advised and send for her, and pay up arrearages. All previous action concerning her had been taken by another body of men politically displaced by these, and from the extreme difficulty of speaking the language, and her total inexperience of the world's way of managing things, Euzelle found herself, when the year came around again, only a fixture at the convent.

Letters she had sent twice, one after another at a fortnight's interval; but these had been, by convent rule, delivered to the venerable padre, who had not mailed them, regarding her marvellous tale only as a new hallucination, and rarely seeing Euzelle herself; nor could he be induced to until some months later, when her stock of knowledge enabled her to go to confession. It had been a cruel privation to Euzelle to look on and see others make their Holy Communion, while she, whose need was so much greater apparently, was unsustained by sacramental aids. She thought that God was answering former prayers of hers that she might receive her purgatory fully in this world. She suffered so deeply now that she feared to pray thus,

lest she should never again see Robert and little Fern. Had she not hoped for his speedy response to her letters, and coming to find her, she would hardly have maintained the courage that she did; and as time wore on, had her trust in God been less, the reason that had yielded to bodily pressure might well have failed again. She looked backward only to think of the moment that seemed most hopeless, when she had confided herself to Him "who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand," and knew that it was still "mighty to save."

Robert, who at first dreaded some fearful reply to his advertisement, and then longed for it, as making definite the cruel certainty that was gradually forced upon him, and giving him the opportunity of other bereft husbands to honor their dead in funeral and memorial, felt first mocked of fate, then punished by God. At last his "good time was spoiled," and it behooved him to ask to what end. He was not ready to do so; humiliated but not subdued, he gave way to bitter grief, but coupled with complaint, and in his frequent repetition of her last spoken words and message to him it was in anguish of pain that he cried: "What is there left but to trust in God?"

He turned from life-long habit to nature. From his earliest childhood and lightest

grief Robert had always sought consolation in the open air, and in gayer days was wont to say: "Nothing is ever so hard to bear outdoors as in, from a cut finger to a broken heart." He felt more shut in with his misery between house-walls, and sought relief in long walks, and in these often instinctively turned to the burial-places of the dead.

In crossing the Common on his way to the Rubber-Works, in old times, Robert had often looked toward an ancient graveyard across the road that skirted the southeast corner. Seen through rows of elms, its gray walls and sentinel trees were picturesque enough, for the arbor-vitæs were not sufficiently close or numerous to produce the common funereal effect. To Robert they seemed only spires, and, like those of churches, pointing upward as if to carry the thoughts in that direction from the powerful sermon beneath.

There is something in the character of a long-unused burial-place wholly different from a cemetery of newly-made graves; the elements of grief and repulsion are less, and the sentiment tenderer, to one who has no personal interest in either. The passionate grief that clings so closely around the newer graves, and insensibly associates itself with the spot to the observer, has been softened by time or perished with the mourner. They died so long ago.

Here, too, the glare of ghastly marble was wanting, few white stones appearing, and the gray of granite and slate blended with the green of turf and masses of rock that cropped out in sufficient extent to prevent close interment, and added a charm that the spot possessed to every artistic eye. It was as if the scattered graves nestled lovingly between the little hills for protection, and hill and grave appealed to the fancy in tenderness.

Robert used to think in summer that the scene never could be lovelier; yet as he saw it in the winter mornings' sunrise, going early to the Works after a fresh snow-fall, he was sure that this was the intenser picture. The spotless covering that mantled the graves suggested to him resurrection robes thrown down upon the mounds, and as the rosy flush of the rising sun fell aslant the ground they became strangely vitalized; and as often as he witnessed this exquisite effect he could never see it without emotion. Some changes of nature can never pall upon the daintiest taste. Over the low hills a distance opened and spread away until the remote Mount Hope closed upon the sky. What a termination to the wistful fancy that started with the graveyard!

With such thoughts he had hitherto pleasantly invested the spot, and they had sufficed

without tempting him within the enclosure. Now, drawn there by strange sympathy, he entered. Unfamiliar with the tragedies of a seaport town, he was touched to the depths of his heart, the first time that he did so, by the inscriptions on stones commemorating those "Lost" or "Buried at Sea"—stones without mounds, and telling the sad stories in words as well: "Lost overboard in a gale"; "Died in" a foreign port. In one case the carven grief was three-fold, and he read:

"This Monument is erected to the Memory
of
Three Promising Youth,
sons of
— and — Howe:
Mark Antony De Wolf Howe,
William Howe,
James Howe.

Returning from a voyage around the world, they were probably wrecked on this coast in the winter of 1802."

Their ages, recorded between the names, were from twenty-one to twenty-six years. Robert involuntarily lifted his hat as he read those parents' moan. "May God have mercy on their souls!" he prayed, thinking of the dead, as many pray for souls thus unconsciously who would not vouchsafe any other petition. The crowded cemeteries in present use he shunned with instinctive dislike, but there was lying among cultivated fields a

single cluster of very old graves that he often lingered near. On one was inscribed

"John Walker.

He was the first-born of his race,
And the first buried in this place."

These graves crowned a hillock shaded by a few locusts and giving outlook on the bay, that rolled up to the nearest field. Walker's Island was a stone's throw from shore. Robert had formed a habit of terminating his short town walks at this field. It was while standing by John Walker's grave in late February that Robert opened a letter just taken from the mail, signed Thomas Austin, captain of the *Curlew*, New London.





XVI.

QUEST.

HE letter was dated two days earlier, at New London, and accounted for delay in transmission of his information by the fact that after a voyage to New Orleans the writer had been to St. Thomas, and again to New Orleans, before coming northward, and had but the day before writing discovered Robert's interest in the thrilling "incident that had marked his last outward-bound Cuban voyage. He had reported the matter and spoken of it widely, and in this way a chance listener, remembering one of Robert's advertisements, had hunted it up in an old paper.

The captain's statement of Euzelle's hopeless condition did not excuse him to Robert for leaving the island without revisiting her and ascertaining it finally, and in the renewal of his grief in its freshest torture he knelt in the snow, fighting against the emotions that, in spite of every human probability, would force hope into being, even on so weak a basis.

The next night found him in New London alone with Captain Austin. He had found himself unable to speak in the presence of the man's family, after depriving a teething infant of Euzelle's pearl rosary. Its worn-out mother was profuse in apology and excuse, and cleared her husband from blame by saying "that he had told her to put it carefully away. It was my fault," she said, scared by Robert's face; "but I went to the bureau-drawer with the baby in my arms, and he snatched at it, and it eased his little, hot gums so."

Robert was trembling with suppressed emotion as he closed his hand over it and listened to the captain's recital.

"All day long she would toss and turn," he said; "and her fingers kept working at something. 'Twa'n't until it come the second mate's turn that anybody guessed what 'twas. 'She's fingerin' beads,' says he; 'she must have been a Catholic.' And we hunted round and found her pocket, and these were in it, and we put 'em in her hand; and sure enough that was it.

"Sometimes she'd drop 'em and kinder sleep; but she never slept long, and was always on the hunt if they lost out o' her hands. I've seen her stop at one o' them air big ones, an' I could catch something that sounded like 'Poor Robare'; and she'd say

this over an' over, kind o' calling as if 'twas a name, an' more about a 'Fairn,' and names that we couldn't catch; and once she said 'little Fairn,' an' then she'd begin all over again about 'Poor Robare'" (*pour Robert*). "But we didn't think she was American at all, for she never spoke an English word except about the 'little Fairn'" (little Fern).

"She always spoke in French if she were excited or in pain," said Robert briefly; "it was the language of her childhood."

"I meant to have gone back to the hospital again," said the captain, feeling self-accused, "though 'twa'n't no use; but when the time for sailing came we crowded two days' work into one to take advantage of weather, an' I went 'thout sleep two nights myself."

Of course there was but a single thought in Robert's mind, and, without even the delay of a return to Bristol, he contented himself with writing to Mrs. Russell and the bank in making arrangements for the support of his household, and took the train to New York and the first steamer for Havana.

On the deck of the *Morro Castle* he had time for thought and such faint hopes as persistent nature would enforce and equally reluctant nature teach him to withdraw in self-defence. On the ninth day he stood in the burial-ground of the Cardenas hospital with every hope crushed. With the change of adminis-

tration that occurred soon after Euzelle had been received great irregularities had also taken place in the registration of several days. The date of her entry, as well as could be obtained from the schooner's log, found no corresponding entry in the Cardenas record. In the same week were recorded the names of several women admitted, two on the day before, one after, but unmistakable Spanish names. It could only be inferred that her name being unknown, it was omitted from any form of entry.

"Could no one remember anything?" No one did, except one old attendant who recalled some one brought in that answered the description well enough, and a boy in the pharmacy who had heard it talked over and recalled Captain Austin, whom he described. The boy was a great chatterer, and "thought that the *señora* died," without recalling any circumstance that fixed the fact. The old man thought that it was for her coffin that he was sent out to the carpintaria three or four days later. The officials were sure that she must have died; "if she had recovered she would have gone away, or been sent somewhere, or at least have communicated with her husband." This last argument convinced Robert—"were she alive and in her right mind she must have sent him word"; but the expression, so nearly true, did not hint the

truth to him in the converse of the proposition, and he turned into the burial-ground a hopeless man.

“There were the November and December interments,” some one said, pointing out the place with unnamed wooden memorial crosses, and he was left to choose. “My God, this is horrible!” he cried.

They found him in an unconscious state an hour later; and, quite broken down by so many months of grief, suspense, and final despair, he became an easy prey to yellow fever, at that moment epidemic in the harbor, and was taken to the hospital.

There came an evening in the month of May when, coming up as from the grave, he was carried down to the wharf and placed on board a bark molasses-laden and bound for New York. The doctors had said “he must not lie another day” in the pestilent tropical air; with the sea and northern breezes he “might” recover—but it was a significant “might.”

When, one evening late in the month, he staggered rather than walked into Mrs. Russell's, a meagre, hollow-eyed creature, beard and hair having been sacrificed, Mrs. Russell and Lizzie Ashford, sitting with little Fern in the twilight, failed to recognize him; and Lizzie, who had screamed, ended with a flood of tears at his pitiful appearance, and the other woman hardly refrained.

His own home he had found closed. In his hurried departure he had sent Mrs. Russell a check for such remittances as he had thought would suffice for the brief absence he had planned, dividing between himself and her all that was at the moment available. When it came to an end, and weeks rolled on without news, Mrs. Russell was in real embarrassment. The servants, long since discouraged by the state of things, settled their own affairs by seeking other homes. Old Suzanne, a heart-broken woman, found out some former friends in New Rochelle, and died with them before Robert's return. Mrs. Russell had closed the house and brought the child to her own home, Lizzie devoting herself to it untiringly. Anxious fears were about giving way to real alarm, and serious questions of what was to be done, at the time Robert reappeared.

If the twilight had found him a startling object, the daylight had ghastly revelations of its own, as at noonday the invalid slowly crept down-stairs to a long-waited breakfast. Tears now sprang to Mrs. Russell's eyes that could not be repressed. "I must have been a picture three weeks ago to-day," said he, with a feeble effort to provoke a smile, "when they carried me aboard the *Sea Fox*. I knew when they looked at my trunk that they thought I had better have brought my coffin."

He was too weak to plan, scarcely to think,

for himself; hardly cared at the report of the dispersion of the servants, feebly thanking Mrs. Russell for her good management. "You always know what to do," he said, and settled down to the situation as if it had been prepared for him, without a spoken word as to whether he should go or stay. He could draw checks upon his own available funds, and assented to Mrs. Russell's proposal to hire a nurse for Fernald, to whom he was, in his changed appearance, a total stranger. He was almost too weak at this moment to mourn.

All the summer long he had to be nursed and watched and cared for, and whatever Mrs. Russell left opportunity for was seized upon and supplied by Lizzie Ashford. His wants were guessed before he recognized them; his gradually increasing appetite tempted by delicacies prepared by their hands. Lizzie especially seemed to have studied his nature so well as to anticipate the moments when he wanted to be left alone—a triumph over man, if we could but fathom it. Were he too tired to read the newspaper, Lizzie had done so in advance, and could quote the leading items of interest; and both ladies knew how to modify the calls of numerous and would-be annoying visitors.

With the autumn came positive renewal of health and vigor, and then, for the first time, Robert attempted to take up the loose ends

of matters neglected. There was enough of it, and three months had hardly sufficed to set the money matters right when a cold, contracted at New Rochelle, threatened to banish Robert from a Northern winter. He had gone to this place for the double purpose of attending to the sale of the homestead and of placing a memorial window in a newly-built church; for with returning strength had come renewal of grief, if less poignant.

The uncertain date of Euzelle's death made the idea of a monument painful to him, so he chose her favorite mystery of the Rosary, the Annunciation, and made it bloom forth in united warmth and delicacy of color; the pictured scene being empanelled by the beautiful lilies of the Annunciation, in which old masters so delighted, and to the words of holy acquiescence, "Be it done unto me according to Thy word," he added only her name, and made it her gift to the new church. It was a delicate appreciation of what she would have wished, and a just tribute to her character in ideal conformity.

Then his cough was decided enough to send him away, and, with torturing memories of Cuba, he went to the Bahamas and stayed until another May. It was a lonely winter among strangers. He missed the petting and caressing of Mrs. Russell and Lizzie, and never in his life did he suffer so from want of com-

panionship, making no friends in his moodiness, and he felt fairly homesick for such comfort as was left him in Bristol.

Though no longer a subject of their nursing, he was the recipient of the sympathetic cares of the women who were wont to minister to him, and insensibly the intimacy that he had for years felt with one was now extended to the other also. "Cousin Cynthia," he would sometimes say, in the appreciative, convalescing days, "how kind you are to me, how very kind!" And if this chanced in Lizzie's presence, common gratitude demanded similar expression toward her.

How she treasured up such words with a meaning that he never intended, and fed upon them in secret with a hope that she did not try to banish! And this year promised more than ever she believed; but she felt that it must be a year of fruition as well. She had waited so long, so faithfully, faith must be rewarded; she could live on hope no longer. She misinterpreted his own great gladness in the present return, and waited for the first Sunday to fortify her conclusion that his gladness was in returning to her.

From the day that Robert had given over his first quest for his wife, each Sunday had found him in her place at church, and attentive as he had never been before. He was always saying, "Teach me what it is to trust

in Thee, O God!" and listening with the earnestness of a child to whatever instruction was given from the lips of the priest.

Lizzie had said to herself, as if superstitious or taking it "as a sign": "As long as he goes to the Catholic church he will remember and love Euzelle. The first time that he crosses the threshold of a Protestant house of worship with me he is mine." But this she had never yet induced him to do.

The first Sunday after his return was stormy, and the excuse that it afforded for staying from one church would not allow her to urge his going to the other. But during the week Joey Pickering's wedding took place. It was on a Thursday, the weather clear and cool, and Robert had no excuse for refusing her, nor would he pain so old a friend as Joey; but he did not reflect that it was his first appearance again in the social world, and that he was making it with Lizzie Ashford. As they stepped over the threshold of St. Michael's the word so oft repeated rose to her lips, and she murmured softly to herself with downcast eyes: "It has come at last—he has crossed a Protestant threshold. He is mine!"

A factory girl in the crowd around the door, used to a different congregation and manners, said: "She is praying, asking her blessing as she goes in! How pretty she is!"



XVII.

SHE HAD HER WAY.

ROBERT, too, found Lizzie pretty, and was so far responsive to overtures that mainly came from her that, unconscious of any feeling differing in nature from that Cousin Cynthia provoked, advanced very far indeed toward intimacy with the younger woman.

It was not until August that Lizzie became discouraged, and then she was disheartened indeed, and grew ill and was threatened with a return of the old symptoms that had sent her away from Bristol in unhappy dejection after Robert's marriage. Then it was that Judge Ashford came to the rescue and appealed in terms to Robert.

It is not often that a man pleads thus with his fellow. It has happened. We have in one other instance known a father to take this position, and, in true anguish for his daughter's peril of life or reason (and she was ultimately insane), beg her salvation at the hands of the man she loved.

Robert was startled. "He had not meant this." "True," said the judge; "but think what your action has meant! All Bristol thought that you would marry Lizzie before you went away last fall." That was true enough, for Bristol jumps at amorous conclusions as quickly as any other small town of equally free speech. "Has she not been as a mother to your child," urged the judge, "and devoted her bright young life to it and to you? And shall I see her perish before my eyes?—for die or become insane she certainly will. Do you deny that you have allowed her to cherish hopes, in the exclusiveness of your attentions, to which any woman would cling?" Robert was in confusion and pain. "Give me a little time," he said. "I will answer you to-morrow."

We have followed him through too many phases of feeling to dwell upon them now. It was a little after midnight when he sought the old graveyard, and, near the monument he had so often sought when he thought that she had perished in the great, deep sea, knelt, saying: "O my darling! I have never given you up. Would that she could be satisfied with my friendship; my love was only yours." And to himself he said: "I suppose it would wrong Lizzie now to refuse her."

Had he prayed to God as well there might have been found a way out of it.

So the morning found him with the judge, an accepted lover, and the relieved father but waited to say: "Bless you for this, man! Be good to her and you shall never regret it," and hurried to telegraph Lizzie's return. He had not ventured to propose that Robert should go for her; something in face or manner forbade.

"He has gone through with so much," said the judge, consoling himself. "It is a pity that Lizzie has to take such a wrecked heart; but it was her way, and Lizzie could not think of another, once her mind was made up." With a kind of vexation he muttered to himself, in spite of all his fondness for his only child: "Spunky little devil! I kind o' pity him." The judge sometimes thought in Yankee, if he spoke in English.

Lizzie was at home a night and half a day before our not too ardent lover presented himself. Yet let us be fair: having done so, he found himself very comfortable with her indeed. "O fickle man!" says one. "O weak one!" argues another. We have but simple truth to tell. His friendship of the last year and a half, to say nothing of that which had preceded it and in which he comforted himself with the thought that Euzelle had shared, went far to make the position an easy one. And though the love-making was not that of the ardent youth that had once

ill-brooked the delay of a servant at Madame Martial's door, he was man enough and weak enough to be very satisfactory to Lizzie.

There was another point on which Robert secretly exulted. When a woman does the wooing she must be prepared, in the reversed position of things, to make the concessions usually granted to her by the lover who sues. Robert felt this, and, while resolving not to be tyrannical, felt excused for maintaining an independence he had neither sought nor desired with Euzelle. So it happened that when Lizzie would have brought him to St. Michael's he was peremptory once for all. "You are not really a Catholic, you know," she had said; and if ever Robert had wished to be one, it was from the feeling provoked by her tones as she spoke.

"I am no Protestant," said he briefly but firmly; and once after, when they were reading over the marriage service of that institution, he had said: "I shall not feel half-married by that." But he had to check Lizzie's tears after it, and assure her that she was too superstitious, for she had taken it as another "sign."

They went "over the threshold" again in September; and this wedding was as showy as the first had been quiet, the judge and Lizzie both delighting in ceremony and many guests. Little Fern, who had been taken to church, got naughty and had to be removed,

producing a mixed impression on the public mind, and other "sign" seekers found one in a trivial blunder of Robert's at some important point.

For his first honeymoon Robert had not known how to stay invention or expense. Now his sole exertion had been to wholly change the room that had been his with Euzelle. He would not have used it at all had not the necessities of the cottage compelled; and when Lizzie entered it, it was no longer the sea-shell pink, but a soft gray—very pretty still, but wholly unlike; not a picture or ornament remained the same.

He had asked Lizzie if she would like to go away, and she had expressed a wish for the White Mountains; but they remained but a week among them when Robert seemed to consider a return to Bristol desirable, and nothing beyond. He had found it most unlike the days that had been on Mount Hope, and truly he feared to think of those.

Lizzie, triumphant, was very triumphant indeed. More than once it seemed to Robert as if she liked to show him off as a conquest; but, trained in the school of Euzelle, he repudiated the thought as a fault of his own. "Why should I not be pleased that she is proud of me?" he said to himself reproachfully. But was she proudest of him or of having had her way and day?

The hour that Robert first asked himself this question without blushing was less than a month from their wedding-day, when Lizzie's receptions and social gayeties were a little arrested for want of material. There were not enough summer visitors left to make brilliant evenings, and Lizzie was a little tired of the Bristol round. "It's almost comical," said she, "to see the same set, the same young girls and men, on the floor over and over; the same old wall-flowers around the room. We are a countrified set, after all, in not knowing better than to leave them there. I should think some of them would never accept another invitation."

"Yes," said Robert, "I have been surprised to see who were taken and who were left." "You've done your own duty by the elders. I never saw a man devote himself so to the regular fudges night after night." "I'm not sure that I sacrificed myself much," said he; "there's more wit in old Madame Watson and her dry speeches than in a roomful of empty-headed girls; and as I'm not a dancing man, the pleasure of pulling about a miscellaneous lot of girls ceases after a few awkward attempts." "You didn't look as if you found Amy Niel awkward or inane," said she, frowning a little; "you had the bad taste to dance with her twice last night."

And Robert, not having been drilled in the

school of common wives, instead of telling Lizzie that Amy had been shamefully neglected, and that it was true benevolence on his part, made the mistake of praising her, and found that Lizzie was going to be both jealous and exacting. As Robert scorned round-dances with Euzelle's own principle, the matter was easily compromised for the future, and Robert, who was tired of so much entertaining, began to hope for a little quiet at his own hearth-stone.

But Lizzie was not yet weary of showing him up as a prize, and, though it was not coarsely done, it was evidently a motive, and one that for the moment seemed to eclipse that of her affection, which was as real as selfish affection ever is. So there were tea-drinkings, and calls, and drives, and Lizzie had asked for Euzelle's pony phaeton, at which Robert winced a little, and found that this was going to be the deepest jealousy of all.

Lizzie had been too keen a student of that other union not to know Robert beyond his own self-knowledge. While the round of social pleasures lasted etiquette prescribed their rule of conduct; but when they were alone Lizzie missed something that she used to see between the pair she envied, and finally reproached him for want of it. "Do you love me as well as you did Euzelle?" she would sometimes ask; then, as if fearing the an-

swer, she would say passionately, " You do— you must," and bestow and seek caresses that he sometimes responded to, to escape words. At other times this feeling took the form of accusation and reproach. " You are not with me as you were with her," and he had said in reply: " Do you think such things are made to order? " And this was an arrow that really sank into Lizzie's heart. She did not know how to withdraw it, and the wound grew deep, and her sole idea was to make Robert suffer the pain that he had inflicted on her.

He did suffer with the irritability of minute pains following great anguish, and from ignorance of what to do and the continuity of the treatment he became gloomy, often morose. He was cut off from counsel with Cousin Cynthia, partly from his sense of honor, which would not allow him to confer with any one as against his wife; and had it been possible as in old times without direct complaint, it was no longer practicable. Without positively quarrelling, Lizzie had contrived to banish Mrs. Russell from the house.

Cousin Cynthia had kept friendship and borne much for little Fern's sake, until the very palpable annoyance that Lizzie felt, and the finally spoken word " interference," forbade any action that could be so construed.

It was evident that the child was to share

in the general ban of all that pertained to Euzelle, of whom he was a strong reminder. Every succeeding phase of development made the personal resemblance closer: the same beautiful forehead and deep-blue eye, the same sweet mouth and smile; and soon gestures and movements began to remind Robert of her in those days when he wooed his little wife unconsciously, as a child.

There had been an October day, the anniversary of his marriage with Euzelle, when the autumn foliage and the autumn sky had been so like those of the golden moments that they shared that he yielded to the temptation, and drove over to Mount Hope with little Fern. For a time he re-lived the former days, and, hardly knowing why, taught Fern to say Pometacom and Weetamoo and other Indian words; but suddenly a great pain smote him, and, the old grief returning in full tide, he gave way.

The child had seen it, and told enough on his return to provoke inquiry, and then came their first deliberate, ugly quarrel, in which Robert, like a novice, surpassed as well as surprised himself. When good-natured people give way they are apt to give way very far, and those who rarely quarrel will sometimes fight. Robert found himself using language that he had never addressed to man or woman; and when Lizzie, maddened by the

knowledge that she believed was then hers—that he scarcely cared for her, if not really scorned her—made him one taunt more cutting than all that had preceded it: “I despise you,” he cried, “and wish that I could go from the sight of you for ever!”





XVIII.

BEFORE THE CRUCIFIX.

WITH the harsh words ringing still in her hearing he went abruptly away out of her presence, and in a fury of wrath dashed off on one of his tramps. But a sense of shame was not long in coming, and it cooled the anger that was hotter in his bosom than any that he had ever known. He had been harsh to a woman, and that woman his wife, one whom he had sworn to cherish and to whom his harshness was now cruelty. Lizzie was blessed with a finer, tenderer hope than any that she had ever known, and it was one that they ought mutually to share.

“I am a brute,” he said; “but what is the matter with me?”

As he spoke he glanced upward, and, nearing the humble church of St. Mary’s, the rays of a young moon fell upon and illuminated the cross that crowns the building.

“Perhaps I am refusing my cross,” he said, “and so God has not taught me yet to trust in Him.”

A side door stood ajar and he went in, thinking of the refuge a Catholic church af-

forsaken through its generous ever-readiness, as well as weekly facilities.

He was quite alone, there being no light except the suspended sanctuary lamp, and a faint ray of moonlight just touching the veil of the statue of the Blessed Virgin. He had never addressed a prayer to her before, but groping his way to the rails he knelt, crying with a voice that would have been audible had there been human ear to listen: "Mary, Mother of God, speak to your crucified Son for me. Pray, Mother of Sorrows, that I may trust in God!"

His old prayer for trust in God! He had seen it written on the sands as he lay prone at Watch Hill; he had thought of it as he watched the luxuriant waving of palms; he had moaned it from his bed of fever, and again as he gazed from the deck of the vessel. It had blazed out to him from the Southern Cross, and he had murmured it, watching his lonely northern skies, to Orion and the Pleiades.

But now he appealed through the Mother of Sorrows, and swift and speedy was the response. Kneeling there in that dark, empty church, there came a twofold vision, flashing light in upon his soul as into the hidden depths of a cave.

First he saw himself. Not as the world had valued him—a man esteemed and respected among his fellows, carrying himself

loftily and greeting his like here and there as a prince or king, and they his peers; he saw that thin veil of himself for an instant, but it was torn away, and he stood revealed as he looked in the eyes of God. How had God made him, and what had he done with himself? A being endowed with all his senses and with every faculty for doing God's work in the world and promoting the welfare of his fellow-man. And to what end had he used these? Simply for himself and for his own selfish enjoyment. There was a momentary thought that he had been free from flagrant sin; but had he ever been tempted to it? Had he committed such would it not have been the most deliberate wallowing in mire? But of the image of God in which he was made what reflection was he giving? A simple seeker after his own pleasure and happiness. And memory unrolled an endless series of pictures of ease-loving months and years, and scenes in which he had screened that precious fellow Elliott from every repulsive thing, every annoying or disagreeable experience, and surrounded his fastidious soul with delights, rejecting everything that could be named sacrifice.

“What soul has made one step nearer God and heaven for my having lived in the world?” said he.

And then a thousand moments of little, for-

gotten sins rose up to sight; or, if not sins, little meannesses confronted his quickened perceptions, that made him even more ashamed than occurrences more fitly named guilt; and when he questioned his purity of thought, word, deed: "O Blessed Virgin! how dared I name thee?" and he cried, "Pray, pray for me!"

And then there came another vision, so unlike the last that it banished it completely. He saw the courts of heaven and the Blessed Trinity looking down upon a worldful like himself, steeped in utter and complete selfishness, every man "a law unto himself, and yielding obedience to none"; and the picture of a lost world of souls like his own was horrible to look on. And he saw the Son of God arise and, veiling a majesty that swelled his gazing soul to a fulness that it had never felt, take on the form of this same selfish man, as the only measure of salvation.

Man might have been saved by other means had God elected, but oh! how God-like was such election. To touch each soul through sympathy; to say to each suffering, sinful being: "I, sinless, suffered this too, and for you, to save you; don't do so any more"! To suffer, until not a quivering, throbbing pulse, or tired, overwrought mind, or despairing, broken heart, of chained slave or giant intellect could say, I have suffered this alone!

And to crown this with one sorrow that surpasses even man's conception, when in the Garden an agony was known that men may only name in whispers; an hour when God's averted face permitted suffering whose merest shadow we can only picture! No man has ever lived Gethsemani!

With this second vision came such a glow into Robert's soul that for the time he forgot himself and all his misery and sin. The stupendous mystery of the Incarnation was revealed to him as in a dream, and not until the grandeur and the glory had a little passed did his thoughts revert to himself.

Then it struck home. "It was done for me, for me!" And he looked upward, where high above the altar rose a Form but faintly shadowed in the dimness, but it was there; and crying as with the doubting saint, "My Lord and my God!" poured out his soul in great swelling sobs, weeping as he had never wept. How long he stayed he never knew. By and by there were footsteps, but he heard them not; then a hand gently touched his shoulder, and a voice said: "My son, it is late." It was Father Hubert again present, through simple customary visitation, and Robert rose up to greet him with a face that he had no thought of concealing, so wholly self-forgetting was he. The sobs could scarcely be controlled as Robert, striv-

ing to speak, used almost the very words of "I have been blind, now I see," concluding his confidence with the pious ejaculation, "What wilt thou have me to do?"

To none on earth could this appeal have been more safely made. Smitten by mortal disease for nearly three years, Father Hubert had sat face to face with death, unknown to any, fighting his battle valiantly in secret and alone. Leaning on no human sympathy, but drawing all consolation from God alone, he had seen his physical forces failing, but felt his soul grow strong.

What the value of his instructions to others were can never be adequately estimated this side of eternity. Men and women who knelt to him in sin and rose up shriven went forth with singular courage to renew their own life-battle, not knowing how near the divine fountain-head this soul was laving its own thirst. Little children came and went from the confessional, and one of them said once to its mother:

"I know now how the children felt that Jesus blessed."

And this great work was nearly ended, but before the chastened spirit took its flight one more leaf was needed to complete the crown awaiting the conqueror's brow, and Robert was plucking it.

"Do you remember our talk in our first

walk together in Bristol, father?" asked Robert.

"From that hour I have never failed to ask daily that the will of God be fulfilled in you," said the priest quietly.

"All these years, and not discouraged? I should have thought you would have forgotten or tired some time," said Robert, not yet used to measuring time by the light of faith.

"Some of these years have been short," replied the priest, weighing them in the balance of a near eternity, "and had I faltered I might not have tasted to-night's joy." They parted with appointments for the morrow.

Robert had now to seek Lizzie's forgiveness in genuine contrition. The ordeal would have been humiliating had his soul drunk at shallower fountains. As it was, he bore her multiplied reproaches so meekly that at length in very shame at his gentleness she ceased to make them.

As one stinging sarcasm after another, or bitter reproach, fell from her angry lips, he saw only a mocking crowd surrounding a thorn-crowned central Figure, who bore their reviling silently, and he whispered to himself: "He merited naught, but I deserve this." And when in final vituperation she spared not Euzelle, his saint, whose name she had never before dared to profane, he thought of the scourging at the pillar that cut the sacred

flesh of Him who should henceforth be his example; and, though tears coursed down his cheeks, he remembered his own sharp words and punished himself in silence. "Euzelle was where words could not hurt her now," he thought.

Whether her health had been imperfectly restored in its failure before marriage, or only the suffering incident to her situation affected her, physique and temper failed Lizzie together. It seemed to Mrs. Russell, who had seen the beginning of this, that, whether conscious or not, Lizzie felt as if the time had come when some one besides herself ought to bear what she had borne through her long period of delay and disappointment, and, once beginning to inflict, she could not stay her hand.

What it would have attained or whither she would have been driven is impossible to say, but for a change in Robert that was revolution. Even in seeking Father Hubert next day he waited until every fancy of Lizzie's had been gratified; and her caprices were not few. It was Robert's turn now to coax her appetite, and wait upon her fancies great and small, and he tried to remember how kindly she had nursed him.

Lizzie would reward him, if it could be deemed reward, by spasmodic outbursts of affection, but, failing to elicit what she desired in full, she oftener suppressed them.

She could not fail to observe Robert's altered manner. No word or act of hers could provoke unkind response; she could sometimes see his color come and go, as she reached bounds once unbearable; sometimes the hands would involuntarily clasp, but that was all, and there was an air about him that mystified her.

He received conditional baptism in November, going over to Fall River for the purpose, as Father Hubert was too ill to keep his engagement in coming to Bristol. When he told Lizzie she said in her inimitable tones: "Oh! I see; you are taking up the rôle of saint!" And after a pause of reflection: "I wondered what had tamed you so. Well, that will be comfortable for me."

Tamed he might have been, but no one looking at his face would have chosen that term to apply to the joyous peace that lit the eye and settled on the brow. There was an elasticity of movement, an animation in place of the old gloom, that made a pleasant atmosphere about him. People that had lately passed him in brief salutation felt inclined to speak to him, and were glad that they had done so afterward.

Among these were some of Euzelle's former objects of care, and he visited them in their homes, listening and learning double lessons. There were many trifles in her beautiful life, of which he knew nothing, which thus came to

light, and this experience in itself opened a new existence to him. He was learning from her still, and it was very sweet to be taught, as if by her, how to work for God.

So he hunted up old protégés, and others found him out, and he was not a little comforted for the lack of joy at his own hearth-stone. Things could but improve somewhat there. No one can sustain a one-sided contest, and Lizzie had to desist for want of material when Robert would not respond or met her tirades gently.

His Christian growth was as rapid as his conversion had been tardy. It seemed as if the seed had been abundantly sown and waited only its chance for development, and there was promise of rich harvest. Euzelle's beautiful example was priceless now. He seemed to have grown like her in what he most admired, and he told himself now that what he had best loved was the Divine example itself shining out in her life. At last he fathomed as a key to her character that which had seemed a mysterious charm, and, better yet, applied it to the still unopened intricacies of his own interior life. He read eagerly her favorite books, and in the marked passages found frequent help in perplexity.

Especially did these teach him humility, and oh ! how odious did his past self-seeking and personal pretension seem ; for, if Robert had

nurtured a palpable weakness in the past, it had been an excess of self-respect often observable in the children of the better classes.

One day Lizzie called him "a stupid fellow."

"You are right," said he with a smile; "I am no more than a child who has begun to go to school."

Yet he oftener lost sight of himself in the great, overwhelming love that possessed his soul. It was with him less "*my sin, my weakness and misery*," than conception of the greatness of the One who had freed him from it, the sufficiency of the Redemption. In renouncing sin there may be also a beneficial self-renunciation, a looking upward so firmly, faithfully that microscopic self-examinations are somewhat lessened. It is that gazing at the brightness of the star that hides from us some unlovely worm at the feet.

And the love that was drawn from the great central fountain flowed in abundant streams on all around. It melted and subdued Lizzie to a certain extent, and on one occasion, after she had put his patience to a severe test, she did not hesitate to say: "Rob, you are a great deal nicer than you were."

Some physical improvement in her case during the spring sensibly ameliorated her conduct, but her temper would often fail

still, and the obstinacy, the "firm will," as it was named, that was the signal trait of her being was unchanged.

"I should have to receive an awful lesson to break my will," said she of herself in these days, for she was frank and without deceit. This trait of candor was illustrated when, in the late spring, Robert succeeded in bringing Mrs. Russell back as a friend.

"Cousin Cynthia," said Lizzie in a tone that was full of sincerity and conviction, "I have behaved very badly to you, but a deal worse to poor Rob there." She certainly strove to make reparation to the friend, but whatever principle of living was set at naught, or what mystery defied the solution, Lizzie could not make Robert happy in simple human fashion for two consecutive days.

She was conscious of her general faultiness without knowing in what the details consisted. She would think of that other beautiful union that she had studied, between Robert and Euzelle, and secretly pronounce her own a failure; yet declaring to herself: "Whatever is wrong I don't understand; she could not have loved him better than I do."

And Fern was a perpetual reminder. She was jealous of him, and though trying to treat him well could never love him, and would gladly have sent him elsewhere. Robert had to draw very fine lines of action in his demon-

strations between the two. In July Lizzie became the mother of a son herself, and maternity proved humanizing; in the tenderness and satisfaction that ensued never had she appeared more amiable. Softened by this new experience, she exhibited something approaching patience, and a delight that all were invited to share. It was a pleasanter home than it yet had been. Even little Fern was included in a measure, and once Lizzie was heard to say: "You poor, little motherless thing!" pityingly.

Her face was a study as she watched Robert teaching Fern to love his little brother, and though she said, "Of course he'll be jealous; older children always are," listened without denial to Robert's theory that this was a matter of education for which parents were responsible.

"Can I ever love Fern, really love him?" she asked herself. And her reply was, made with usual candor, "If he looked like Robert, perhaps, and not so exactly like his mother."





XIX.

THE DEAD PRIEST.

 LIZZIE'S convalescence was slow; she had not had what nurses call "a good getting up," and August found her still a prisoner, though moving slowly about the house.

Robert had been most devoted in his attention, remembering, as he kindly told her, how much he owed her in the past in way of nursing. But now he was to leave her for a day, the first since her illness, and it was the fifteenth of August. On this Assumption Day Father Hubert's funeral was to take place.

Robert was to drive over to Fall River at an early hour with Cousin Cynthia, who had known and admired the priest in the years following Euzelle's marriage. "He was one of the 'salt of the earth,'" she said. Emmy Pickering had volunteered to stay with Lizzie.

During the drive Robert had much to recall and tell of the early, promising years of Father Hubert's life, and of his influence as a student and collegian.

"And I have little doubt," he concluded, "that, with all that his last years have shown of the fulfilment of those promises, the very best of it was quite hidden out of sight."

"I thought of him last night," said Cousin Cynthia, "as I took up your *Imitation* and read of those who are 'dear to God.' "

"Every soul must be such," replied Robert, whose heart was growing wider ever day, "or there would have been no Incarnation."

"God loves all who'll let him," she said, "but I guess he has his favorites. Parents will love and do for their children alike, but they know which ones love them best."

"It is hard to think of a single soul unreached by Divine loving," said Robert.

"And it is hard to think of any hungry crowd starving and unfed," said Cousin Cynthia, "with abundance of bread before them. God can but provide and offer, but I sometimes think that some of us act as if we expected to be caught and have it stuffed down our throats."

Robert smiled at the forcible comparison, but there was something in the tone in which it was spoken that was far from trivial, and the suspicion of a tear in the woman's eye.

"Don't you think, Cousin Cynthia," asked he, "that it was rather in that way that I was fed?"

She did not answer his question directly,

but seemed to be thinking. "It was queer enough," she finally answered, "that neither grief nor pain nor uncommon sorrow could reach you, and that after all you were brought to terms by the common fretting of common life." She knew that he would not misunderstand or take offence.

"And what could be wiser in the economy of God than just such measures?" he asked.

"Well, my own tangle is still about me," she said. "I can see nothing clearly, and it's been worse and worse ever since the day I helped bury that Irish child. Sometimes I think that I am waiting for God to work a miracle in my behalf, and I sit and wait, and then I go at it and read and think, and say something that I call my prayers; but I often feel as if they didn't go higher than my head."

"That reminds me of my own fashion of praying until the night when I asked our dear Lady's aid." And Robert then told her what he had never before spoken of except to Father Hubert.

"If that priest were alive I would ask him to pray for me," she said.

While Robert was about to reply they arrived at the church, and, though an hour remained before the beginning of the requiem Mass, the church was nearly crowded. It was evident from the garb and appearance

of a large number that this man had been loved by the very poor, and in the hands of such the beads were telling, while tears flowed from many eyes.

In the open casket, surrounded by floral tributes, reposed the remains of the dead priest, his hands closed upon the chalice that it had been their privilege so often to elevate before his people. Robert looked at those hands and thought how well they had fulfilled the purposes of their consecration, but ceased to consider them in noting the expression of the face. It was more like sleep than death, and the most fastidious could have found nothing more repulsive than in a beautiful piece of statuary.

Cousin Cynthia said that "it seemed to her as if his last look had been straight into the gates of Heaven, and what he had seen was reflected there. In life or in death it was the most beautiful face she had ever looked on."

After the Mass, whose music had one long accompaniment of sobs and even articulate moans, the sermon was delivered by one who had been his friend and intimate for many years, and, in the earlier college days, Robert's also.

He presented to their minds a picture of poor, stricken Job, afflicted in body and mind, deprived of wealth and home and children,

smitten by disease, and finally, in physical and mental torture, seeking consolation in the thought that "God, who created all things," had given another manifestation of his power, and of his supreme dominion, in taking away what he had given, under what circumstances and at what time he thought best. This situation and its lesson he applied to the general tendency of the human heart, when agonized by some sudden and paralyzing grief, to take refuge in the belief that God has willed it, and in its own desolation to force from its depths to the lips the cry: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so it is done: blessed be the name of the Lord." This was the only consolation of many souls to-day to whom the cutting-off of so useful a life in its prime would be otherwise an unfathomable mystery; yet, while acquiescing in the Divine Will, he availed himself of the divine permission, sanctioned by the divine example at the grave of Lazarus, to weep.

Touching the personal associations between Father Hubert and himself, which in all the steps followed from youth together, toward and ending in the sacred calling, had "exceeded those of friendship," the priest said it could be easily believed that for him there could never be another Father Hubert, and that there were individuals before him whose

hearts, stayed through years of weakness by this strong soul that had fled, could lament with him in the words of David: "I grieve for thee, my brother. As the mother loveth her only son, so did I love thee."

Touching the hundred ties that bound him to those present, whose father and director he had been, whom he had united in holy bonds, whose little ones he had baptized, and instructed, and trained; to the souls whose burden he had lightened, and in relieving whose external wants his great charity had kept him very poor—for these, too, there could not easily be found another Father Hubert.

On his talents, marked as they were, he dwelt briefly. It was not the brilliance of his oratory that was now going to appeal for him at the heavenly courts, but the eloquence of an heroic life. He told them then of the three years' hidden strife with death, concealed from all but his physicians, and known only to him, his intimate friend, but lately, and of his ruling "desire to make others happy, and say or do naught that could cause others pain."

"Think, friends," he concluded, "of what he bore while he toiled for you, and accept from me now and here his message to you, as he gave it to me the night before the last with his dying lips. Think that those still lips are

saying: 'For three years I have been awaiting this moment, for three years I have known it was a surety, and I have spoken to each man, woman, and child as often as I have had need, as I would have spoken from beyond the grave. In the shadow of a near eternity I have taught them; bid them think of my instructions, and tell them I have loved them all.'

"And then I named the piteous suffering," said the preacher, "in which he had toiled, and he said to me 'that for each soul alone he would have borne that suffering for its salvation'; but he was too humble to send you that as a message."

The preacher's voice was drowned in its emotion, and the silence was unbroken but for the audible sorrow of the people. The bishop pronounced the final absolution, and the last sad farewell followed. He had been dearly loved in life, and would be remembered and obeyed in death.

On coming forth from the church Cousin Cynthia's face was nearly as pale as the dead priest's, and the drive home was a silent one.



XX.

DE PROFUNDIS.

ROBERT left Mrs. Russell at her home and drove toward his own. As he approached Emmy Pickering came out to meet him, looking carefully back to see if she were observed, and, moving slowly as if with unconcern, spoke to him at the gate.

“She’s been as nervous all day as she could be,” said Emmy; “and a little before noon she fixed her attention on that vessel which came to anchor out there beyond the point, and has had all sorts of fancies about it. Thinks there’s yellow fever on board, and that we are in a line to leeward; imagines that it will blow on shore and infect us. There have been other things, but the old brig has been the object to which she has continually returned.”

“This is the first entire day that I have left her,” said Robert; “and as she was disposed to be nervous, I suppose the first object that presented itself determined the course of her fears.”

“Well,” said Emmy, relieved, “I am glad

that you have come. I had begun, in sheer sympathy, to look upon the old vessel as being in some way ominous to our peace."

"I believe that it is the old *Condor*," said Robert. "I heard that the Ushers were expecting her last week, and she is a little overdue. See, they are making sail on her now; in an hour she will be in port." And they both went in to relieve Lizzie's fears.

There came a day in the month of June when Euzelle threatened to become troublesome. She had sufficiently mastered the Cuban Spanish now to make both mother-superior and padre-confessor understand her story, and her conduct was such as to admit of no doubt as to her sanity. She now made it distinctly understood that she wished measures taken to restore her to her country and her home. There was no fund from which money could be forthcoming, and this Euzelle was made to understand; but she was able to convince them that once in communication with the outer world she had funds of her own that could be drawn on.

She would trust no more to correspondence, but go into Cardenas she must and would, and to this the reverend mother finally assented, hedging her in with many instructions and providing a faithful attendant. This was in July. Instinctively she sought the wharves,

and by inquiry was directed to the house of Safford Brothers, who had the week before completed an arrangement by correspondence with Havana for freighting the *Condoka*, of Bristol, with sugars and molasses, consigned to its owners in that place. She was expected daily.

Whether her story would have obtained full credence or not with them, the arrival of the brig substantiated it. Captain Austin sailed no longer from New London; the *Sea Fox* had been wrecked on Orange Key, and he had for two years commanded the *Condoka*.

"That woman alive!" said he to Safford, Senior; "and I told her husband that she was dead and buried here in Cardenas. By George! and they told him so at the hospital, too. He came out here to look after her, and liked to have died of Yellow Jack."

Euzelle, who had returned to the convent while awaiting the vessel's arrival, was sent for, Captain Austin going to the convent in person, and startling the sisterhood, now informed of the story, by confirming all previous statements and completing much unknown to herself. Of him she had, of course, no memory.

In the midst of the leave-taking he was seen to stop short, while a true nautical oath fell upon Euzelle's shocked ear. It was

happily untranslatable, and non-significant to the religious. To Mrs. Elliott he pretended to have stepped upon a scorpion; but more than once on the voyage home did he repeat the expression *sotto voce*, as he paced the deck. It came at first from a sudden impression that he had seen Robert once driving on the Poppasquash Road with a lady who he had been told was a second Mrs. Elliott; the picture was strong enough to be tormenting, but too vague to warrant his speaking to Euzelle.

“Queer how folks ’ll turn up that you think are dead—specially if they go to sea. Never trust anybody ’t goes to sea to live or die, till you see ’em do one or t’other.”

Euzelle did not understand the long studies of Captain Austin, of which she was evidently the subject; but had she reflected would naturally have supposed that there was food enough for thought in the past experiences of which she was the heroine.

Her own feelings had but one longing, forward conception, and outsped the full sails. The voyage was favorable; the delay that made the brig late in arriving at the port of Bristol being due only to delay before sailing. The anchoring off Poppasquash was due to some temporary quarantine regulations, about to be removed by disappearance of epidemic, but which, in the absence of the health

officer for a few hours, retarded the arrival of the brig for the same length of time.

All that summer afternoon Euzelle sat on or walked the deck in sight of her own home. By the aid of the captain's glass she could have discerned and recognized Robert had he been at home, and more than once she saw a child playing on the piazza and in the yard. Could it be little Fern?

She could only remain tranquil in the moments when she went below to relieve suspense in prayer. She told her beads for Robert, she told them again for her child, and oh! so faintly and with a sickening heart for God's help to prepare her for any cruel disappointment that might be in store for her. Were either of them dead? It was her only fear. Each time she arose strengthened, and went on deck to renew her agitations with the sight of home.

As they made sail in the late afternoon she had even seen the carriage approaching the house; but finding her post of observation in the way of the preparations for sail-hoisting and landing in general, went below to complete her own arrangements, or she would have seen Robert go into the house.

It was twilight when her feet touched Bristol earth. She could have stooped and kissed it. With beating heart and hurrying step she went up the first cross-street to Hope,

the main avenue of the town. Past familiar houses, by the old De Wolf mansion, under the ancient elms she sped, her step a little unsteady after the sea-voyage, and in climbing the steps by the post-office, where the walk lies a bank above the street, she stumbled. Some lounging youth made it the subject of feeble jest, calling her a runaway nun, but she looked in no man's face, and neither man nor woman knew her.

Her costume, made as best the poor Sisters could adapt their serge to the world's ways, had their fashion about it still, and her veil and head-gear were, of necessity, of their construction modified, but very nunlike.

Past St. Michael's, where she began to tire; and when she had reached Madame ~~x~~ Martial's great open garden she stopped and leaned upon the fence. As she did so she remembered another summer night when she had stood there with Robert enjoying the odors rising from the box-hedged beds, and she recalled something that he had said of "the dainty smell of heated box." It was powerful now and mingled with the perfume of honeysuckles, and she breathed it as an incense of welcome.

It was her last halt. Three more minutes brought her to her own door, and her heart beat so with excited feeling that she could hear it as she held herself up clinging to the piazza-rail.

The day had been very warm and both outer and inner doors were open. She looked into the little salon, and saw, with a lightening glance, Robert sitting with a child in his arms larger than she had pictured Fern to be; but it must be, and was, her child. And Lizzie Ashford was there.

"So Lizzie was alive too, and kept up her friendship," she thought. "But whose baby had she brought in? Perhaps a neighbor's, to amuse Fern"; but the thought came and went as inconsequential. No suspicion of the truth entered her mind. Never in her wildest imagination or surmises had this possibility occurred to her. To her, had Robert died, it would have been an impossibility, and she had assumed it as to Robert, with never a disturbing jealous thought; imagining him only, with fear, as dead, or, if living, with pity for his loneliness.

She entered with the double, tremulous cry: "Mon Dieu, mon Robert, enfin!" It was so long since she had used English words, and since her recovery she had thought only in French.

As she clasped her child to her heart, Robert and Lizzie rose to their feet, recognizing in the strangely-draped figure before them Euzelle, and from their lips her name came simultaneously.

But to Lizzie the recognition was the light-

ning that reveals but to destroy, smiting unto death, and as Robert stood up with outstretched arms she darted between him and Euzelle, and instinctively thrust her baby into them.

“Robert, Robert,” she shrieked rather than cried, “take your baby; I am your wife!”

She had been the first to fathom the situation and its calamity. As for Robert, as he recognized it in its horror, he stood riveted to the spot as if turned to stone. Lizzie's cry was ringing in his ears, and he saw her, no wife, but a dishonored, nameless woman.

But Euzelle, his wife, was living, had come, was here. The words that were ringing in his ears had fallen upon hers, and pierced her heart, so long, so sorely tried; she swayed sidelong with the bodily weakness following the cruel knowledge so sharply thrust upon her, and would have fallen had not Robert, hastily returning the infant to Lizzie's arms, supported her.

With the touch and embrace came all that he had been hitherto suppressing through the time that he believed justice to Lizzie had demanded it. And the sorrow and hopelessness, and disappointments and human wrongs that he had borne, surged over him in this moment of concentrated living as, with tears and embraces, he sobbed:

“My love, my love, my love!” until speech failed him.

Lizzie was on her knees pleading, begging frantically, for "one word, only one loving word," she said, "such as you gave me last night."

Robert heard, saw nothing but his old heart's love, the love of his life, until those last words, screamed in agony of despair, made themselves heard.

"May God be merciful to you, Lizzie!" he said; and it was heartfelt prayer. But as he spoke he raised the half-fainting Euzelle in his arms, and, bearing her through the rooms, laid her tenderly in his bed.

Then it was that Lizzie read her fate. A look of despair settled on her face, and, pressing her child to her bosom, she went out at the open door with uncovered, drooping head toward her father's house. The few who chanced to meet her and hear her moans remember them as not of human utterance.

Euzelle, exhausted but not fainting, lay silent where Robert had placed her. This was the home-coming she had pictured so long and prayed for so hopefully! Her mind struggled to reconcile the facts she found with the ideal husband she had known and loved, and in this moment of confusion it seemed to her that there were two of them. In her weakness she was nearer selfishness than she had ever been in her whole life, and the tempter, ever ready to the occasion, whis-

pered thoughts of distrust. She recalled the old past, and seeing Lizzie's former love for Robert clearly now, and with a woman's vision, listened to the suggestion that it had been returned as soon as he was free to grant it. "Why not? He had the right; there was no dishonor, believing her dead." But were this so, what was her own position now? What were her rights without his heart unchanging, unchanged?

She lay like one in a stupor, but with widely-open eyes that seemed to see nothing; nor did she reply to any of many questions Robert pressed. Truly alarmed at her condition, Robert sent hurriedly for Mrs. Russell and a physician, when she spoke briefly but firmly to forbid the latter, and relapsed into motionless silence again.

The news of Euzelle's return had reached Mrs. Russell before the messenger that Robert sent, and she was nearly at the door when thus summoned. She entered the room at a moment when Robert despairingly turned from his wife and, kneeling before the crucifix that he habitually used, drew from his pocket the rescued beads, her beads, now blessed for his usage. With his invocation of the Triune Name Euzelle turned to him, listening.

"You, too?" she said feebly, pointing to the crucifix. "You pray?"

"And why shouldn't he pray?" spoke Cousin Cynthia in her brisk little accents; "he's as good a Catholic as you are, every bit and grain, and goes to his Communion every week steady."

"O Cousin Cynthia!" said Robert, "do not speak of me; pity her misery at what she has found."

"And I don't suppose you've told her a word as to how it happened. You are a true gentleman, Robert Elliott, and afraid to throw the blame on Lizzie; but this is one of the crises of life in which sentiment must not be considered beside common sense."

"There now, darling," she said, taking Euzelle's drooping head on her shoulder and speaking as to a hurt child; "she shall know all about it. And, Robert Elliott, don't you put a word in edgewise to make or mar!" And she gave the stricken wife a picture of the manner of his second wooing and winning, which we despair of quoting.

"But, Cousin Cynthia," said Robert, aghast at the forcible manner with which she depicted his capture, "how did you know all this? I never betrayed a word to any living soul."

"No; nor never would have done, I suppose, even if another heart should break for the hiding. But, luckily, Judge Ashford wasn't bound so fearfully as you, and was so scared

by what he had done, and your appearance the night that he brought you to terms, that when he left you he went and sat on the common awhile to think it over. When you ran out like a madman, and up to the graveyard, he rushed after you, and then back to me. 'Mrs. Russell,' said he, 'I don't know but he will commit suicide! What do you think? And he was white as a sheet.'"

"'No, judge,' said I, 'he won't to night; but you may drive him to it in the end, and if it's done it will be done in St. Michael's Church.' And they say the judge looked at the wedding as I guess my words would have made him, if he recalled them; he was more agitated than anybody there, and he had to sit down at the wrong place."

But before she had reached this point Euzelle had left her, and had drawn Robert before the crucifix again. Cousin Cynthia saw that she could be spared, and, as they knelt together, stole softly out.

"I guess I shall be wanted at the other house before morning," she calmly observed. There was a message from Judge Ashford's awaiting her return, and she folded her hands rather hopelessly at the pitiful rôle of consoler that she looked to play there.



XXI.

CONCLUSION.

ET would be well, perhaps, to drop the veil upon the culmination of our recital in the return of Euzelle and her reunion to Robert. As the misadventures of travel and disasters of life in general are the real centres of interest in whatever is told, it is generally well to withdraw after a tragic or heroic episode, leaving the stimulated imagination to descend from such heights unaided. But we confess to sympathy with those homely souls who wish to know "what becomes of everybody," and as this improbable story is such because so largely true, we consent to carry out the final threads even to insignificance.

It was the old Euzelle in whom we have known but one moment of weakness—when in her perplexity she failed to fathom her husband—the same unselfish woman who, rising from her knees fortified by prayer, turned to him and said:

"What can we do for Lizzie?"

Had anything been wanting to express to Robert her full appreciation, her entire identi-

fication with himself, these words would have supplied it.

He knew what had come back to him in the unselfish, devoted woman, and now he knew the secret of her strength and love. No words of forgiveness were ever needed or spoken. They took loving counsel together long and earnestly, and there were interviews between Judge Ashford and Robert, but he never met Lizzie again in life.

For some months she kept her babe, unable to nurse it herself. The doctors had forbidden it from that fatal night, and a wet-nurse had been procured. Before her services were at an end Lizzie's serious failure in health rendered her removal to a medical institute desirable, and little Robert was brought to his father's house. Euzelle had wished this from the first, and would have seen Lizzie, had the latter consented; but the latter only said: "She is a noble woman, but I could not bear it yet." But when little Rob was to go there was a long and, we must believe, satisfactory interview, for Lizzie had expressed an unlimited admiration for her after it to her father and to Mrs. Russell.

"She will be to him such a mother as I could never be," she said to one and to the other. "She will make of him a noble man, for he is Robert's very self." And he was as like his father as Fern was in resemblance to his mother.

There were three happy years accorded to Robert and Euzelle before the undoubted parting came—three years of as nearly perfect happiness as human living gives. They were rich in the glow that illumines others and reflects upon the source of light bestowed. Not simply in alms-giving charity, or in the care of the very poor; their giving reached a higher social grade, and spread in circles that are not usually designated charitable.

There were souls of growing youth and developing maidenhood to be inspired. Years after, when a certain man was praised for an exceptional fulfilment in business that was scarcely an obligation, the remark was made as explanatory, "Oh! he; he was one of Elliott's boys"—referring to one of a class that he held in special companionship and training.

Girls and women clung to Euzelle in like manner. One who had been tried in sorrow brought another, and her great heart was wide enough for them all, and was stronger yet with Robert's to lean upon. When the day was done and they took sweet counsel together, they drank from such pure fountains of happiness as such natures seek, thanking God as fervently and humbly as the poorest recipient of their own bounties could have done.

A daughter widened and rejoiced the home-

circle during the last beautiful year, and then it was time for so much unalloyed happiness in this world to end. Robert's death was swift and his illness nearly painless. There was a week of nursing, a day or two of increased suffering, then with perfect consciousness of the end, and fortified by the sacraments of his church, he gave up life calmly and without regret.

"You are to forget this present pain," he had said to Euzelle as for a moment she faltered, "in thanksgiving for our unwonted mercies and in precious hope." And truly his own life had of late so merged in hope and thanksgiving that it had seemed as if God had wished to give meaning thereby to the words that he left as a legacy to Euzelle.

And she toils on without him to-day, carrying out many a noble plan commenced with his aid, training his children to honor his memory and sustain the fair name he had won in the community. He enters into every twilight talk, until "papa's wishes, what papa would have liked" are present law among them.

A few days ago Fernald and Rob were with other lads busy on the shore in front of the house building a fire on the sands under the road wall, probably for some of the shore cooking in which Bristol boys delight.

"Bother!" said Robert (now ten years old)

as something failed ; but a malicious imp at hand chose to apply the expression as a response to Euzelle's call just made at the door.

" You needn't mind her ; she's not your mother," said the boy Maclane.

" Say that again," said Rob, throwing off his coat and putting himself in attitude. He had a quick little temper and ready fists. But something remembered checked him—something within rose up ; his fists unclenched, his eyes drooped, then rose to meet Maclane's with steady gaze.

" My mother would not like me to fight you," said he in manly fashion ; then, as the reactionary anger surged up again, out came in boy language, " and I'll obey her now, and all the rest of the time."

He dashed, coatless, into the house to make up for the delay. Did Euzelle love him ? How could she help it with her Robert's eyes shining out upon her from the warmest of boy-hearts, and Robert's every peculiarity of feature and movement ? For he was, as Lizzie had said, his father's child in all resemblance. People said that if she could spoil either boy it would be he ; that he more easily won indulgence than Fern.

Which loves her best none can say.

When the errand she had called him to perform was done he turned to her in assumed carelessness, asking :

"Isn't there a stray cookie or piece of pie somewhere for that beach-comber Maclane? I was near fighting him again just now—" A pause: "They don't have such mothers down at his house as we have up here."

"I should think you'd be satisfied with having thrashed him twice," she said, thinking how much larger Maclane was than her boy.

"And, Rob, you rogue!" said she again, "take care or I shall be loving you some day for your own sake as well as papa's." And she gave him the food desired. The words were a reward, for she felt instinctively that battle had been renounced in obedience to her wishes.

Both boyish arms were around her until Fern, coming in, asked, "Where's my chance?" But between these there could be no rivalry. Never did two dissimilar natures vary only to suit in very difference. Fern is a restraint upon Robert, Rob a stimulus to Fern; the latter a more general favorite from a peculiarly sunny temperament, and the pair are manly and full of promise.

It was about a month after Euzelle's return that we listened to a characteristic piazza talk at Cousin Cynthia's, some one remarking that "Ned Barnes had taken up free-thinking, and I was talking a good deal about it."

"Trust Ned to advertise himself; whatever he does, he must always make a sensation," said his former ally, Will Lennox.

"Do you suppose it will last?" asked Emmy Pickering.

"There are certain minds who pass through such phases and come out stronger in faith than ever," said Mr. Knowles, who was again in Bristol, and this time for Emmy's sake.

"I never knew but three people so attacked," said Mrs. Russell. "Two of them had it 'the natural way,' as we say of some diseases, and were just such as Mr. Knowles described afterwards; the other one gave me occasion to smile no longer ago than yesterday. He fell into this state of mind about seven years ago; when he was attentive to the person whom he soon after married. He was anxious to carry several of us along with him in his way of thinking, but none of his views took deep root except in the mind of his wife. I particularly remember that, after he had done away with the existence of God, he was most anxious to persuade us of the non-sacramental character of marriage, arguing at great length upon it as a mere social contract. His wife had been trained up a pretty strict Congregationalist, and to hear those two sit and rejoice in 'liberty' would make you think the rest of us were in dreadful bondage.

"Their talk made one think of school-boy and Fourth of July independence. They were so determined to make us all believe the same thing that I said one day, 'Seems to me you don't allow any liberty of thought at all!' And when they wanted us all to form a glorious alliance of free thought and social progress then and there, I remember saying:

"'I guess I'll hold on to my liberty till to-morrow morning; I might embrace some new idea between now and then that would run counter to the plan.'"

"It seems to me," said Mr. Knowles, "that the more positive knowledge that I get leaves me less liberty than before. Each new fact ascertained defines and restrains speculation; it is certainly so in all scientific and philosophic advances, and the religious seems certainly analogous. Fools must enjoy the real talked-of liberty, which is license." And he quoted:

"They who know nothing fear nothing."

Then Cousin Cynthia resumed narration:

"I was going past a store last night, and heard a man complaining to my free-thinking friend that he could stay no longer, he 'must go home and let his wife go to meetin' up at the Catholic mission. Fur his part he sh'd think one day in the week was enough for church.'

“‘For God’s sake, Porter,’ said my friend, ‘if your wife’s got a meetin’, as you call it, let her go to it, if it’s three times a day. A woman with a religion is anchored; she’s somewhere, and you know where to lay your finger on her. A woman without a faith is worse than a rudderless ship.’

“I understood the bitterness of his meaning. A woman who admits no obligation to God will be slow to fulfil any toward man, and over and over again have I heard this man’s arguments hurled back at him by his quick-brained, witty-tongued wife. Without being guilty of gross social wrongs, she is a natural flirt; and the ‘social-contract’ theory has been repeated to him in nauseating doses as he has remonstrated with her on various occasions. She says that, as long as she gives him equal liberty, he can find no fault; but you can picture what sort of disunion grows out of a marriage in which each considers only what are their own rights. I think them the most unhappy pair that I ever knew who remained together.”

“What a contrast they must form to the Elliotts,” said Mr. Knowles, “who are certainly the most united people that I ever knew.”

“Do tell me, Cousin Cynthia,” said Emmy —“for you always see the meaning of everything—what you learn from the almost tragedy that we have just witnessed.”

"I see there," said Mrs. Russell solemnly, "what I have seen before in life, though never in so marked a way, or in anything that so drove the lesson home.

"I see that when man wants his own way so dreadfully that he can see no other, when, instead of seeking the will of God, he says, I want this beyond everything, God sometimes takes him at his word and lets him have it. And so man's way becomes God's way. But that is when God means to punish; and a most awful punishment it is. I've had a taste of it myself. When I was young I wanted Bristol, and wanted it dreadfully, along with some other things; and I've had them all. Bristol has been stuffed down my throat; and for the rest of the things, I've wanted anything, everything else, ever since I got them."

"Poor Lizzie wanted Robert dreadfully, I know," said Emmy, "and I know how Robert felt when he thought he could not marry Euzelle; but she, who never wanted anything but to find and conform to the will of God, why had she to be so punished?"

"I dare not answer you in my own words," said Cousin Cynthia, "after some that I have just received that express my own idea perfectly." And she read from a letter that day received :

"There are plenty of coarse or beautiful but scentless flowers from which the perfumer never thinks of attempting to extract

fragrance, because it is not in them. But the rose-petals, the jasmine-blossoms he crushes, for the reason that they are most precious of all, but their fragrance needs to be drawn out. So God spares many of his children sufferings which he inflicts on others, because the former are, so to speak, not worth the trouble, while he afflicts the finer, higher natures for the spiritual sweetness, the soul-fragrance their ordeal compels them to yield."

"That's Euzelle Elliott," said those listening. "If ever woman was depicted, it is her portrait," said Mr. Knowles.

"And now," said Mrs. Russell, "I've learned several lessons by heart that I'm going to put into action. With the help of God, I'm going to-morrow to the Catholic priest, and if he will take me he shall make me whatever sort of Christian I am good for, poor stick that I am."

"Do you think that you have taken time enough to consider?" asked Lennox, to whom, from infrequent visitation, Mrs. Russell's movement seemed more abrupt than it really was.

"Well, I've taken all the thinking time I've had for fifty-two years," was her answer, "and I'm only ashamed that it's taken so long. Fact is," she added, "I've known it would come to this ever since Father Hubert's funeral, only other folk's work has stood in the way; but, if God wills, I am going to-morrow."

And Emmy Pickering, coming softly over to her, placed her hand in that of the elder woman and said:

"I will go with you."

This is briefly the story of Cousin Cynthia's conversion as she told it to Lizzie after her baptism :

"Things were leading me up to it," said she, "for some years before I knew the Elliots, and every step that I took with them and with you was bringing me nearer; and my talks with Father Hubert most of all. But it was at his funeral that the whole matter was settled. People had prayed and cried the best of an hour and more, when that sermon began, and his friend the priest talked. I was trying, in a queer way of my own, to ask God to hear one little prayer of my heart for that noble soul just released. For you must know that I believed in praying for the dead many a year before any other Catholic doctrine got hold of me; it was so natural and consoling, besides being authorized.

"The preacher asked us to listen to the last words of his still lips, which were full of the most sacrificing love. Just then I felt something as sure and plain as anything that is happening before me now, and it was Father Hubert, as bright and happy as you could think of a saint in heaven, speaking to me.

"'Mrs. Russell,' said he, 'you need not pray any more for me; God has heard you and the others, and now I am praying for you. Go home and do the first duty that God sends you; then go to the priest.' And

that night," she continued, "I was called first to Robert's house, then to you, and the day after I left you I went to the priest; and there's the story."

It was a year from the day of Robert's death that Lizzie sent for Euzelle to come to her. It was not Euzelle's first visit to her by any means; but for reasons of delicacy such visits had not been frequent before Robert's death. Since then they had occurred often, and at Lizzie's request both boys were from time to time brought to her.

Lizzie was so changed, so sad a woman, that the heart of youth found little in sympathy, and the visits were short; but her gentleness struck them, and they pitied her, hardly knowing why.

"My other mother is a very kind lady," said little Rob once, "but we always make her cry dreadfully."

He was six years old then, and Euzelle had told him that Lizzie was his mother too that he might love her better. At that age he had accepted the fact of the double maternity without question or a disturbing thought.

The anniversary of Robert's death had come around, and Euzelle had intended to make it a day of fasting and prayer. She was a little surprised at Lizzie's summons.

It was after a sleepless night, of which Lizzie's face bore traces, that they met. There was a basketful of exquisite flowers.

"These will be my first, last, only offering," said she, "and I know that you will mingle them with your own at the Junipers (Bristol Cemetery). You have long known my earnest wish, dear Euzelle, which has been constantly at heart since my baptism. The fathers agree that my health is now sufficiently re-established to attempt my novitiate, and I go to-morrow to Manchester; so this is farewell."

Then she asked Euzelle to read a paper legally drawn up. After the appropriation set aside for her dowry to the convent there was a sum that by ecclesiastical approval should be devoted to her son. Judge Ashford, now two years deceased, had been a richer man than was commonly supposed, and the sums were not trivial. Another woman than Euzelle would have been surprised to find the amount equally divided between Fernald and Robert.

"They are both Robert's boys," said Lizzie, "and have fared alike at your hands; why should they not at mine?" And Euzelle knew that it was exactly what she would have done herself, what Robert would have wished, and she acquiesced.

That was four years ago. To-day there is

a Sister of Mercy in St. Mary's Convent at — so uniformly cheerful, so steadily calm, that those who have not known her have often remarked: "She was born for a nun."

The mother-superior, who knew her in the world, recalls some days and scenes that she quietly reflects were those of discipline, but once she remarked to ears that could appreciate the statement in wonder: "If ever I have a recalcitrant pupil to drill, I send her for instruction to that model of obedience, Sister Magdalen"—for this is Lizzie's name in religion.



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